

# BOMB ATTACK IN SAUDI ARABIA

Y 4. AR 5/3: S. HRG. 104-832

Bomb Attack in Saudi Arabia, S. Hrg...

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FOURTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

JULY 9 AND SEPTEMBER 18, 1996

Printed for the use of the Committee on Armed Services



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# THE BOMBING OF U.S. MILITARY FACILITIES IN SAUDI ARABIA ON JUNE 25, 1996

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TUESDAY, JULY 9, 1996

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:40 a.m. in room SD-106, Senate Dirksen Office Building, Senator Strom Thurmond (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Thurmond, Warner, McCain, Coats, Smith, Kempthorne, Hutchison, Frahm, Nunn, Exon, Levin, Bingaman, Glenn, Robb, Lieberman, and Bryan.

Committee staff members present: Romie L. Brownlee, staff director, George W. Lauffer, deputy staff director; Melinda M. Koutsoumpas, chief clerk; Donald A. Deline, general counsel; Christine K. Cimko, press secretary.

Professional staff members present: Charles S. Abell, Lucia M. Chavez, John H. Miller, Bert K. Mizusawa.

Minority staff members present: Arnold L. Punaro, minority staff Director; Andrew S. Effron, minority counsel; Richard D. DeBobes, counsel; Patrick T. Henry, professional staff member; Julie K. Rief, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Patricia L. Banks, Shawn H. Edwards, John R. McLeod, Jennifer L. Wallace.

Research assistants present: Daniel B. Ginsberg.

Committee members' assistants present: Judith A. Ansley, assistant to Senator Warner; Ann E. Sauer, assistant to Senator McCain; Thomas L. Lankford, assistant to Senator Smith; Glen E. Tait, assistant to Senator Kempthorne; David W. Davis, assistant to Senator Hutchison; Patricia L. Stalnacker, assistant to Senator Santorum; Andrew W. Johnson, assistant to Senator Exon; Richard W. Fieldhouse, assistant to Senator Levin; Steven A. Wolfe, assistant to Senator Kennedy; Suzanne M. McKenna, assistant to Senator Glenn; William Owens, assistant to Senator Robb; Randall A. Schieber, assistant to Senator Bryan; Mary Weaver Bennett, assistant to Senator Bryan; Darren Dick, assistant to Senator Frahm.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR STROM THURMOND, CHAIRMAN

Chairman THURMOND. The committee will come to order.

The Committee on Armed Services convenes this morning to conduct a hearing on the circumstances and consequences of a terrorist bomb attack on the Khobar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, on June 25, 1996. The bomb attack resulted in the deaths of 19

U.S. military servicemen and injuries to approximately 550 others, including 250 Americans.

I would like to express my deepest condolences, on behalf of the Committee on Armed Services, to the families of our servicemen who lost their lives in the terrorist bomb attack in Saudi Arabia on June 25th. American servicemen and women sacrifice a great deal in volunteering to serve their country, especially when they deploy for extended tours overseas. Members of the committee and the Nation are extremely proud of our personnel in uniform. Our sincerest sympathies are extended to the beloved ones of those who sacrificed their lives, as well as to those injured, during the bomb attack.

The American people, the administration and the Congress are obligated to provide the very best security and support for those in our Armed Forces who volunteer to stand in harm's way. We must do all in our power to provide for the continuous readiness and protection of our men and women in uniform as they serve our nation on dangerous missions in an increasingly volatile world.

Occurring on the 46th anniversary of the North Korean invasion of South Korea, this most recent terrorist attack on our troops stands as a stark reminder that the United States must maintain a strong, ready military that is prepared to meet and defeat a wide spectrum of threats to our vital and important interests. We must remain vigilant.

The purpose of this hearing is for the committee to determine the facts surrounding the bomb attack, including the extent to which it was recognized that U.S. military personnel housed in the Khobar Towers were vulnerable to a terrorist attack, the degree to which any concerns relating to such an attack were made known up the chain of command, the measures that were taken to meet the threats that were identified and why safeguards that might have thwarted such an attack or minimized casualties were not in place.

The committee will review decisions made with respect to these threats and concerns by both U.S. and Saudi authorities. In addition, the committee is interested in the state of security for other U.S. Forces posted in regions where they might be vulnerable to similar attacks.

I would like to add that I have always believed that those issues affecting the security of our nation should be handled here in the Congress in a bipartisan manner. Since I have been chairman of the committee, I have insisted that the committee operate in this way.

I do want to make clear, however, that the protection of our men and women in uniform is a responsibility that rests with the leadership, both civilian and military, from the President down, and must be taken with utmost seriousness. I intend that this committee will determine if lapses have occurred in carrying out these responsibilities and will recommend strong action where appropriate.

Our witnesses today are Secretary of Defense William Perry; Gen. John Shalikashvili, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Gen. J.H. Binford Peay, III, Commander in Chief of the U.S. Central Command, whose area of responsibility includes the Middle East.

The committee expects these witnesses to provide information that will assist us in reaching a full understanding of how this tragic event occurred. We must learn what we can from this latest incident, and then do what we must do to prevent a recurrence.

The witnesses are well known to this committee, each having testified before us on numerous occasions, and require no introduction.

To the witnesses, I want to extend to each of you a welcome on behalf of the committee, and we look forward to your testimony.

Because of the limited time and substantial interest in this hearing by all Members of the committee, I request that each of you limit your oral statement to 7 minutes or less.

Finally, before we begin, I would like to remind the Members and the witnesses that immediately after this open hearing, the committee will conduct a closed session with the witnesses in room S-407. We are pleased to have you with us.

The distinguished Senator from Maine, I believe, is in Egypt and could not be here but he is very interested in this matter and he wanted to have me express his interest to all the committee about this. He is interested over there in the fight against terrorism, the peace process, religious security and political and economic issues. Before he left for Cairo, he was briefed on the investigation of the recent bombing in Saudi Arabia and he may submit some questions for the record for today's witnesses.

Secretary Perry, we will begin with you. Excuse me. The ranking Member may have a statement to make.

#### STATEMENT OF SENATOR SAM NUNN

Senator NUNN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I want to commend you for scheduling the hearing. I realize that our witnesses, Secretary of Defense Perry and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Shalikashvili, and Commander in Chief of the U.S. Central Command General Peay, will only be able to provide preliminary information at this point but it will be helpful to us to have whatever they know at this point.

More complete information will await the outcome of the assessment being performed by Retired Gen. Wayne Downing, and other investigations being conducted into the bombing incident.

But I believe it is very important to begin our oversight effort now to ascertain what happened and what steps should be taken in the future. As you have said, Mr. Chairman, that is most important. I want to join you, Mr. Chairman, in expressing my deep condolences to the families of the fine Americans who lost their lives and my heartfelt wishes for a speedy and full recovery by those American airmen and the personnel of our allies who were injured.

This incident underscores the fact that U.S. servicemen and women are in harm's way every day as they perform their missions at home and abroad. I want to commend Secretary Perry for appointing Retired General Wayne Downing to conduct an assessment of the facts and circumstances surrounding this bombing, the extent to which it was the result of inadequate security, infrastructure, policies or systems, and to recommend measures to minimize casualties and damage from such attacks in the future.



In order to fully understand the circumstances surrounding this tragic incident, we must ascertain the answers to a number of questions, as many as we can this morning, but certainly in the course of this overall investigation, including the following: What recommendations to improve security came out of the assessments performed after the November 1995 bombing in Saudi Arabia; which of these were carried out; which were not; and to the extent they were not, why not?

Was an assumption made that militants in Saudi Arabia did not have the ability or expertise to explode a bomb any larger than the 200 pound device used in the November 1995 attack and, if so, why? Where do these assumptions come from? Were they based on intelligence? Were they based on analysis? Was this simply based on what had happened in the past without regard to any real analytical forecast?

Another question: Was human intelligence and other intelligence support on the scene to the Commander effective? If not, why not? Another question: Did Saudi officials turn down a request to extend the perimeter at Khobar Towers facility, and was this decision appealed up the chain of command? What did Washington officials know about that request, and when did they find out about it? What action was taken?

Did the changes brought about by the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols legislation streamline the chain of command and facilitate the oversight responsibilities of the Commander in Chief, Central Command. That is particularly pertinent given the history of the Lebanon chain of command, which was very cumbersome, very difficult and probably had something to do with the tragedy in Lebanon a few years ago.

Did Saudi officials cooperate fully in the aftermath of the November 1995 bombing and are they cooperating fully at this time?

Finally, have the Gulf States themselves taken sufficient action in the aftermath of the Gulf War to improve their own ability to defend themselves? Should the United States be both the residual backup and also the primary frontline support for the defense of the Persian Gulf? Are we going to play all roles, or should the primary role be played by the Gulf States themselves with us being the backup, which was the assumption that many of us had after the Persian Gulf War.

In fact, I think that was our policy. If that was our policy, is that policy still applicable or has it, in effect, been dropped with us assuming all the roles in the defense of the Persian Gulf?

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to hear from our witnesses this morning. We appreciate Secretary Perry, and General Shalikashvili, and General Peay being here. Again, I thank you for having this hearing in a timely fashion.

Chairman THURMOND. Secretary Perry, you may proceed.

#### **STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM J. PERRY, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE**

Secretary PERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The U.S. military is a family. We have just lost 19 members of our family, and we feel their loss—

Chairman THURMOND. Speak into your loudspeaker, please. This is a long room and people cannot hear you back there.

Secretary PERRY. We have just lost 19 members of our family, and we feel their loss deeply. But we must carry on the mission they were conducting. We must learn from this tragic event and establish measures to provide better protection for our forces. There is no issue that I feel more deeply about, or no task that I work harder at, than the safety and welfare of our military personnel. In pursuing that task, I have always had the full support of this committee, and I welcome the opportunity to discuss force protection with you today.

In February of 1993 when I came before you for confirmation, I said, "the Secretary of Defense has the responsibility to oversee the Joint Staff and the CINCs in their direction of military operations. If I am confirmed as Secretary, I pledge to give first priority to reviewing and assessing war plans and deployment orders, and I pledge to provide the required support to CINCs as they direct our force in the field."

You did confirm me and to the best of my ability I have carried out the promise that I made to you and to the American people. A critically important component in the oversight of military operations is ensuring appropriate force protection. The responsibility for the safety of our military men and women is mine, and I expect to be held accountable for carrying out that responsibility.

I carry out the responsibility for the safety of our military personnel in four ways:

First of all, by making judgments on whether the missions that we assign our military personnel are worth the risk of casualties. I manifest this responsibility every time I sign a deployment order.

Second, by judging the competence of our senior commanders, especially those who lead our Unified Commands, the four-star generals and admirals whom I recommend to the President and you confirm, for leadership of our deployed forces.

Third, by making clear policy statements regarding the priority of our missions. In particular, I sign off on each mission statement, which includes the policy on force protection for that mission.

Fourth, by visiting our forces in the field to make judgments on how our commanders are executing their missions, with special emphasis on force protection.

In my testimony today, I will describe in more detail how I carry out these four responsibilities, and specifically how they applied to protection of our forces in Saudi Arabia.

My first responsibility, then, is to decide whether a proposed mission is worth the risk of American lives. No responsibility weighs more heavily with me. I have articulated to you on numerous occasions my belief that when our vital national interests are at stake, we must be prepared to use military force, even at the risk of casualties.

While such a judgment may be thought of as a risk/benefit analysis, for me it is much more personal. I make such judgments every week when I sign operational deployment orders. I made such a judgment when I deployed our forces to Bosnia in the face of forecasts that our forces would be met with fierce armed resistance. I made such a judgment after the bombing of the Saudi National

Guard facility in Riyadh, when I reconfirmed that the mission our forces carry out in the Gulf region is in our vital national interest.

This reconfirmation should come as no surprise to this committee. In every statement I have made on the subject I have made clear my belief that the security and stability of the Gulf region ranks as a vital national interest to the United States. The Gulf, of course, is the world's energy storehouse, home to two-thirds of the globe's proven oil reserves. At the same time, it is a volatile region. It is the reason we fought in Desert Storm and the reason in October of 1994 when we sent forces to deter Saddam's threatened aggression.

Because the Gulf region is so important to us, because it is so volatile, we have developed a several-part strategy to preserve the security and stability of the region. Let me summarize that for you.

We maintain a significant military presence in the region, including air power at host national bases, and naval power on our ships in the Gulf and Arabian Sea. We maintain prepositioned equipment in the region, a brigade's worth of heavy armor in Kuwait, another brigade's worth of equipment afloat, and an additional brigade's worth of equipment going into Qatar.

We maintain lift capability that can get our forces to the Gulf quickly if needed. We maintain access agreements with the countries in the region, and we regularly train with them to help build up their own capabilities. The keystone in this strategy is our military presence which serves as a deterrence to rogue nations by reminding them that the U.S. will fight to defend our vital interests in the region. If deterrence fails, our military presence becomes the base on which we build our fighting force, thereby ensuring a rapid military victory with minimum casualties. For these reasons, then, I believe that our military presence in the region is essential to protect our vital national interests and to carry out our strategy. We must not allow ourselves to be driven out by terrorists.

The second way I carry out my responsibility for the safety of our personnel is to make judgments about who is best qualified to lead our military force. The Chairman is the key military advisor to me and to the President. I have enormous confidence in General Shalikashvili, and this judgment led me to recommend him for reappointment to a second term as chairman.

The commanders in chief of the Unified Commands are the key leaders who direct our troops in combat and in the daily operations that are most likely to lead them in harm's way.

I made another judgment about military leadership when I recommended our current Commander in Chief of the Central Command, Gen. Binnie Peay, for his position. The Commander of the 101st Airborne Division in Desert Storm, a veteran of two tours in Vietnam, General Peay probably has more combat command experience than any Army officer currently on active duty. He is a warfighter, a strategist, and a diplomat. Our Nation is fortunate to have a military leader of his ability in such a critical position.

The third way I carry out my responsibility for the safety of our personnel is by setting clear policy direction. That is the role of civilian leadership. We then rely on the military experts to take the concrete steps to carry out these policies.



One of the missions for all of our operations is force protection. Every military plan must make this a priority. It is an inherent part of every operation and a basic responsibility of our commanders. Whether for training or operational deployments, commanders issue clear guidance on force protection and specify the applicable rules of engagement for each situation.

When troops are in any operation involving risk of combat or high threat from terrorism, force protection becomes critical and complex.

Some critics scoff at the stringent rules by which we protect our forces in Bosnia. We have one full company assigned to guard duty for each battalion, convoys of four vehicles minimum, no alcohol consumption while in theater, flak jackets, helmets, and weapons when outside secure compounds. I gave the order that I wanted the force protection to be a priority, and Major General Nash determined that in his operating environment, these would be the rules. I reviewed those rules when I visited him last week, and I fully support his decision to maintain such stringent measures.

Our operations in Saudi Arabia take place in a uniquely difficult environment. Our pilots, of course, face daily risks over Iraq and must operate at peak performance. Our personnel using Saudi facilities may not face mines, but they do face a severe threat from terrorism.

Terrorists always strike at the weak link in our chain of defenses. Our goal must be to try to find and strengthen those weak spots first with what I call passive defenses, guards, barriers, and fences. But passive measures are not enough. We must also increase our active defenses by getting better at gathering intelligence so that we can preempt or disrupt terrorist operations before they can come to fruition.

We must also work cooperatively with other governments, in this case the Saudis. After I visited with our troops in Dhahran last week, I flew with General Peay to Jeddah where we met with Minister of Defense Sultan who pledged his full cooperation and determination to find and punish the perpetrators.

I then expected to meet with Crown Prince Abdullah, but instead I was asked to meet with King Fahd. The King received me with the Crown Prince, Minister of Defense Sultan, Minister of Interior Nayif, and Foreign Minister Saud. I would note that we were the first official Americans to meet with the King since his illness last November. I know many of you have read media accounts about the state of the King's health. I can only tell you what I observed. The King was fully in control of the meeting.

He met with me late in the evening for more than an hour and then followed that with a meeting with his senior officials for an additional 2 hours. In addition to expressing deep sympathy at our loss, he made absolutely clear his determination to bring the perpetrators to justice, and he directed that there be full cooperation between the Saudi and U.S. investigators.

I then explained to the Saudi leadership our assessment of how serious the threat was and the importance of making significant changes in the security measures for our forces, including the need for rebasing.

The fourth way I carry out my responsibility for the safety of our personnel is by getting out to the field and visiting with troops and commanders. Through this practice I get the confidence I need to make decisions that put people at risk.

I made three trips to Haiti during that operation. I have visited with our troops in Bosnia four times already, including once during their train-up period. I was with them just after they bridged the Sava River, and I just returned from a visit with them over the Fourth of July. I can report that they understand their mission and that they are accomplishing it brilliantly.

I have made four trips to the Gulf region, stopping each time in Saudi Arabia to visit with our forces and with the political leaders. My third trip, in early January of this year, gave me the opportunity to make a first-hand assessment following the bombing at the Saudi National Guard facility. During that visit, I reemphasized that the first priority must be force protection, and I reviewed the security enhancements that had been made for our forces in Riyadh.

I also reevaluated the mission of our forces in the region—the risks, the costs, and the impact on operational tempo, against the goals and benefits. After my visit to the theater that time, I made a followup trip to CENTCOM headquarters to review progress on the actions resulting from that visit.

Last week, I went to Saudi Arabia to see for myself the results of the attack to determine how we should respond to it and to learn, first-hand, how our people had reacted. I found the troops sobered by the events of the preceding days, but the morale was strong. They clearly understood the importance of their mission and the role they fulfill in this important endeavor.

Even amidst the tragedy, we can take pride in the performance of our military personnel in the critical moments before, during, and after the attack. This is a classic case of training paying off. The guards on top of the building spotted the truck, recognized the danger, and immediately radioed an alarm.

Undoubtedly some lives were saved by the alertness and quick reactions of the guards. A patrol in a humvee (HMMWV) responded to the alarm, and a security policeman arrived on the scene in time to warn away four or more joggers. He then went himself to investigate the truck and only survived the blast because it was deflected into the air by the barrier wall.

Training also paid off in how everyone behaved after the blast. 19 airmen, of course, were killed in the blast, but 200 more were injured seriously enough to visit a clinic for treatment. Everyone arrived at the clinic accompanied by a buddy. All the troops have had some basic medical training, and the doctors reported to me that everyone who arrived at the clinic had had some emergency-medical-buddy care. So, on this score I am also satisfied. Our commanders have trained the troops well, and they knew how to react in a crisis.

The mood of our troops was anger and determination—anger in that they want the perpetrators found and severely punished; determination in that they want to prove that they will not be deflected from their mission. By the time that I arrived 4 days after the attack, they had already restored the full operating tempo. Op-

eration Southern Watch hardly missed a beat, and the no-fly zone below the 32nd parallel is in full force.

What can we learn from this tragedy? What went right, what went wrong, what should we do differently in the future? I have asked Gen. Wayne Downing to make an independent assessment of the circumstances surrounding the bombing, and I expect to be able to give you a complete answer to these questions when General Downing's assessment is completed next month. But based on what I have already learned, I can give you a partial answer.

The mission of our forces was clearly understood and recognized to be of vital importance. The chain of command was clear. There was a clear recognition at all levels of command that we faced a high level of threat from terrorists.

Much had already been done to improve the physical security of Khobar Towers, but the security measures we prescribed after the bombing of the Saudi National Guard facility were focused on a threat less powerful than actually occurred, and our local commanders, for a variety of reasons, had not completed some of the measures that were prescribed and which they agreed needed to be done.

Why did we focus on a threat which proved to be understated? For the decades of American presence there, it seemed that Saudi Arabia was safe from the terrorist violence occurring in other countries in the Middle East. During the 5 years since Desert Storm we have maintained an increased military presence. But the security provisions for the residences and offices of our personnel were roughly comparable to those for the forces based in Germany or Japan.

Yet, we know that the mission we are conducting in Saudi Arabia, so vital to us, is opposed by others. Certainly it is opposed by Iran and Iraq, since our forces in the region deter them from actions they might otherwise take. Our very presence in Saudi Arabia is opposed by some religious extremists in that country, some of whom are willing to use violent measures to drive us out.

In November of last year, a group of Saudi religious extremists attacked the office of the U.S. Program Manager for the Saudi National Guard in Riyadh with a car bomb, killing five Americans.

At that point, we made what we believed to be a prudent judgment, that this attack might not be an isolated event but a new trend, and thus assigned a high terrorist threat level to Saudi Arabia. In response to this judgment, we conducted analyses of the vulnerability of our forces in Saudi Arabia. In particular, the Air Force's Office of Special Investigations conducted a vulnerability analysis of the Khobar Towers. It was completed in January of this year. It was informed by full access to intelligence on the terrorist threat to Saudi Arabia.

But the intelligence information, while voluminous and pointing to a high threat level, was also fragmentary and inconclusive. It did not provide the user with any specific threat but rather laid out a wide variety of threat alternatives.

Consequently, our commanders received recommendations to take a variety of actions. Many actions, indeed, were completed prior to the June attack. Some focused on preventing an attack similar to the November bombing. Other actions focused on pre-



venting attacks of a completely different nature, and indeed, may have prevented a different type of attack from taking place.

My assessment is that our commanders were trying to do right, but given the inconclusive nature of the intelligence, had a difficult task to know specifically what to plan for, and many of the protective measures they took were more appropriate for the size of the bomb used in November. But this attack turned out to be 10 times as powerful as the previous attack.

It is evident from what is already known about the attack that the bombers were well organized, had sophisticated training, did extensive practice, and had access to military-quality explosives and detonating devices.

Of course, the investigation is still underway, but it is my working assumption that these bombers had extensive support from an experienced and well financed international terrorist organization. Therefore, based on that assumption, I believe that it is prudent to conclude that we are now facing a significantly higher and more sophisticated threat than we faced in the bombing of the Saudi National Guard facility in Riyadh.

Why were the recommended security measures not yet completed at the time of the attack? Based on his view of the threat and the vulnerability analysis done by the Office of Special Investigations, the Base Commander undertook an extensive set of security measures at Khobar Towers. General Peay will describe those to you in his testimony.

Some of these measures were still in progress, but most of them had been accomplished at the time the attack was made on Khobar Towers. Indeed, the security measures that were already in place undoubtedly saved dozens, if not hundreds, of lives. However, it is also undoubtedly true that significantly fewer casualties would have occurred if all of the prescribed security measures had been implemented by the time of the attack.

General Downing's investigation will shed more light on why some of the recommended measures had not yet been completed, but it seems clear that local commanders—

Chairman THURMOND. Mr. Secretary, we announced that we would have 7 minutes and the full statements will go in the record. Can you finish up pretty quick so the Senators have a chance to ask questions?

Secretary PERRY. Of course, Mr. Chairman.

What can we do to respond to the threat? General Downing will make a complete assessment and recommendations on this, but even before I receive his assessment, I can tell you that the changes required to deal with this level of threat will be complex, expensive, and take many months to implement.

It is fundamentally difficult to provide protection against such a threat particularly in an urban environment, and therefore, I have instructed General Peay to include in his recommendations a plan to move our military forces out of Riyadh, and other urban environments, where it is difficult to provide adequate physical security.

Let me skip to the end and submit the rest of my text for the record here, but I want to sum up as follows:

First, the Khobar Towers bombing was a tragedy that revealed vulnerabilities in the force protection measures we had taken.

Second, we can expect further attacks on our facilities in the command; therefore, we are undertaking a major program to improve our force protection measures throughout the command. This will include plans to rebase our forces that are now located in urban areas.

Third, we must capture and punish the bombers, and if we identify another nation as the source of the bombing, we should retaliate.

Fourth, we must not let the bombers drive us out of the Gulf region. The mission we are conducting there is vital to the security interests of the United States.

I would now like to turn the microphone over to General Shalikashvili.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Perry follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY WILLIAM J. PERRY

Mr. Chairman: The U.S. military is a family. We have just lost 19 members of our family and we feel their loss deeply. But we must carry on the mission they were conducting. We must learn from this tragic event and establish measures to provide better protection for our forces. There is no issue that I feel more deeply about or no task that I work at harder than the safety and the welfare of our military personnel. In pursuing that task, I have always had the full support of the committee, and I welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you today.

In February of 1993 when I came before you as the President's nominee for the position of Secretary of Defense, I said, "The Secretary of Defense has the responsibility to oversee the Joint Staff and the CINCs in their direction of military operations. If I am confirmed as Secretary, I pledge to give first priority to reviewing and assessing war plans and deployment orders, and I pledge to provide the required support to CINCs as they direct our forces in the field."

After that hearing, you confirmed me in my position and, to the best of my ability, I have carried out the promise that I made to you, and to the American people. A critically important component in the oversight of military operations is ensuring appropriate force protection. The responsibility for the safety of our military men and women is mine and I expect to be held accountable for carrying out that responsibility.

I carry out the responsibility for the safety of our military personnel in four ways:

(1) by making judgments on whether the missions we assign our military personnel are worth the risk of casualties. I manifest this responsibility every time I sign a deployment order.

(2) by judging the competence of our senior commanders—especially the those who lead our Unified Commands—the four star generals and admirals whom I recommend to the President, and that you confirm, for leadership of our deployed forces.

(3) by making clear policy statements regarding the priority of our missions. I sign off on each mission statement, which includes the policy on force protection for that mission.

(4) and by visiting our forces in the field to make judgments as to how our commanders are executing their missions, with special emphasis on force protection.

In my testimony today I will describe in more detail how I carry out these four responsibilities, and specifically how they applied to protection of our forces in Saudi Arabia.

(1) My first responsibility is to decide whether a proposed mission is worth the risk of American lives. No responsibility weighs more heavily upon me. I have articulated to you on numerous occasions my belief that when our vital national interests are at stake, we must be prepared to use military force, even at the risk of casualties. While such a judgment may be thought of as a risk/benefit analysis, for me it is much more personal. I make such judgments every week when I sign operational deployment orders. I made such a judgment when I deployed our forces to Bosnia—in the face of forecasts that our forces would be met with fierce armed resistance. I made such a judgment after the bombing of the Saudi National Guard facility in Riyadh, when I reconfirmed that the mission our forces are carrying out in the Gulf region is in our vital national interest.

This reconfirmation should come as no surprise to this committee. In every statement I have made on this subject, I have made clear my belief that the security and stability of the Gulf region ranks as a "vital national interest" for the United States. That judgment has been U.S. national policy since the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt. The Gulf is the world's energy storehouse, home to two-thirds of the globe's proven oil reserves. At the same time it is a volatile region. It is the reason we fought in Desert Storm and the reason we sent forces to deter Saddam's threatened aggression in October of 1994.

Because the Gulf region is so important to us, and because it is so volatile, we have developed a several part strategy to preserve the security and stability of the region:

We maintain a significant presence in the region, including air power at host national bases and naval power on our ships in the Gulf and the Arabian Sea;

We maintain prepositioned equipment in the region—a brigade's worth of heavy armor in Kuwait, another brigade's worth of equipment afloat, and an additional brigade's worth of equipment going into Qatar;

We maintain lift capability that can get our forces to the Gulf quickly if needed;

We maintain access agreements with the countries in the region and we regularly train with them to help build up their own capabilities.

Our military presence in the Gulf region serves as a deterrence to rogue nations by reminding them that the United States will fight to defend our vital interests in the region. If deterrence fails, our military presence becomes the base on which we quickly build our fighting force, thereby ensuring a rapid military victory with minimum casualties. I believe that our military presence in the region is essential to protect our vital national interests and carry out our strategy. We must not allow ourselves to be driven out by terrorists. That would not only reward and encourage terrorism; it would jeopardize our ability to defend our vital national interests.

(2) The second way I carry out my responsibility for the safety of our personnel is to make judgments about who is best qualified to lead our military forces. The Chairman is the key military advisor to me and to the President. I have enormous confidence in General Shalikashvili, and this judgment led me to recommend him for reappointment to a second term as Chairman. The CINCs of the Unified Commands are the key leaders who direct our troops in combat and in the daily operations that are most likely to take them into harm's way. The CINCs must be warfighters of great experience and sound military judgment. Often they must also be diplomats. But most of all the CINCs must be leaders—commanders with the ability and will to make the tough calls when we hand them the mission of protecting America's interests and carrying out our military strategies.

I made this judgment about military leadership when I recommended our current Commander-in-Chief of the Central Command, Binford Peay, for his position. The commander of the 101st Airborne Division in Desert Storm, a veteran of two tours in Vietnam, General Peay probably has more combat command experience than any Army officer currently on active duty. He is a warfighter, a strategist and a diplomat. Our nation is fortunate to have a military leader of his ability in such a critical position.

(3) The third way I carry out my responsibility for the safety of our personnel is by setting clear policy direction. That is the role for civilian leadership. We then rely on the military experts to make the plans and take the concrete steps to carry out those policies. For example, working with military advisors, civilians set the tasks for IFOR in Bosnia, but the military leaders determined the specific plans and activities that are carrying out those tasks. All of you who have visited our troops in the field know well how those operations and corresponding plans devolve downward until they reach the platoon and squad level, where each unit has its piece of carrying out the overall plan.

One of the missions for all of our operations is force protection. Every military plan must make this a priority. It is an inherent part of every operation and a basic responsibility of our commanders. Whether for training or operational deployments, commanders issue clear guidance on force protection and specify the applicable rules of engagement for each situation. Sometimes force protection is a relatively easy task, but it must never be taken lightly, no matter how benign the environment. When troops are in any operation involving risk of combat or high threat from terrorism, force protection becomes critical and complex. Our commanders integrate anti-terrorism awareness training into military training at all levels. In the case of deployed personnel, the training is very specific as to the nature of the threat and the responsibilities of each soldier, airman, sailor or Marine.



Some critics scoff at the stringent rules by which we protect our forces in Bosnia—one full company assigned to guard duty for each battalion, convoys of four vehicles minimum, no alcohol consumption while in theater, flak jackets, helmets and weapons when outside secure compounds—but these are keys to force protection. I gave the order that I wanted force protection to be a priority and MG Nash determined that in his operating environment, these were key rules. I reviewed those rules when I visited him last week, and I fully support his decision to maintain such stringent measures.

Our operations in Southwest Asia take place in a uniquely difficult environment. Our pilots face daily risks over Iraq and must operate at peak performance. Our personnel using Saudi facilities may not face mines, but they must operate in a difficult cultural terrain. They face a severe threat from terrorism.

We have long understood that terrorism is an insidious scourge that must be fought aggressively and with eternal vigilance. But today this threat is becoming even more complex and difficult to counter—as old and new bad actors take advantage of weak governments in newly independent states, new technologies and rekindled ethnic rivalries. The Arabian Peninsula was long an island of relative calm in the midst of regional tensions. That is no longer true.

The Khobar Towers bombing has had a singular effect on the Saudi Government. The King and his advisors now understand, I believe, that they are dealing with a threat that affects not only the regime itself, but also their culture, traditions and honor. We have understood the complexity of the terrorist threat for some time, but to the Saudis it is a relatively new phenomenon. We must help them appreciate the challenge by sharing intelligence and our knowledge of terrorist methods. We must never accept any loss with complacency, but we must also be realistic about the challenge. Every measure we take makes the work of the terrorist harder, but it does not make it impossible.

Terrorists always strike the weak link in our chain of defenses. Our goal must be to try to find and strengthen those weak spots first, with what I call “passive defenses”—guards, barriers, fences, etc. But passive measures are not enough. We must increase our “active defenses,” by getting better at gathering intelligence so that we can preempt or disrupt terrorist operations before they can come to fruition.

We must also work cooperatively with other governments, in this case the Saudis. After I visited with our troops in Dhahran last week, I flew with General Peay to Jeddah, where we met with Minister of Defense Sultan who pledged his full cooperation and determination to find and punish the perpetrators.

I then expected to meet with Crown Prince Abdullah, but instead I was asked to meet with King Fahd. The King received me with the Crown Prince, Minister of Defense Sultan, Minister of Interior Nayif, and Foreign Minister Saud. I would note that we were the first official Americans to meet with the King since his illness last November. We have read many media accounts about the state of the King's health. I can only tell you what I observed. The King was fully in control of the meeting. He met with me late in the evening for over an hour, and then with his senior officials for an additional 2 hours. In addition to expressing deep sympathy at our loss, he made absolutely clear his determination to bring the perpetrators to justice. He also emphasized to everyone in the room that he expected full cooperation between the Saudi and US investigators. I explained to the Saudi leadership our assessment of how serious the threat was and the importance of making significant changes in the security measures for our forces.

(4) The fourth way I carry out my responsibility for the safety of our personnel is by getting out to the field and visiting with troops and commanders. Through this practice I get the confidence I need to make decisions that put people at risk. I see and hear how the commanders and troops understand the goals and policies I have set. I reassure myself that the tasks that I have set them are both worth the risks, and doable with the forces committed. I talk to the political leadership of the countries where our troops are deployed and get a sense for myself of the operational environment. I look at how our troops are protecting themselves.

I made three trips to Haiti during that operation. I have visited with our troops who are now in Bosnia four times, including once during their train-up period to get a first hand look at their preparation. I was with them just after they bridged the Sava River and I just returned from a visit with them over the Fourth of July. They understand their mission and they are accomplishing it brilliantly.

I have made four trips to Southwest Asia, stopping each time in Saudi Arabia to visit with our forces and the political leaders. My third trip, in early January of this year, gave me the opportunity to make my own first hand assessment following the bombing at the Saudi National Guard facility. During that visit I re-emphasized that the first priority must be force protection. I also re-evaluated the mission of our forces in the region—the risks, the costs, and the impact on operational tempo,

against the goals and benefits. It is clear in retrospect that the actions we took to respond to the threat were not adequate to deal with the attack that actually occurred. But I still conclude now, as I did then, that this mission continues to be of vital importance to the United States.

I made another such visit last week. I went to Saudi Arabia to see for myself the results of the attack, to determine how we should respond to it, and also to learn first-hand how our people had reacted. I found the troops sobered by the events of the preceding days, but their morale was strong. They clearly understand the importance of their mission and the role they fulfill in this important endeavor.

Even amidst the tragedy, we can take pride in the performance of our military personnel in the critical moments before, during, and after the attack. This is a classic case of training paying off. The guards on the top of the building spotted the truck, recognized the danger, and immediately radioed an alarm. Undoubtedly some lives were saved by the alertness and quick reactions of the guards. A patrol in a humvee responded to the alarm and a security policeman arrived on the scene in time to warn away four or more joggers. He then went to investigate the truck and only survived the blast because it was deflected into the air by the barrier wall.

Training also paid off in how everyone behaved after the blast. 19 airmen were killed in the blast, but two hundred more were injured seriously enough to visit the clinic for treatment. The Air Force has a buddy system, and the buddies took care of each other. Everyone arrived at the clinic accompanied by a buddy. All the troops have had some basic medical training and the doctors reported to me that everyone who arrived at the clinic had had some emergency medical "buddy care." So on this score I am also satisfied—our commanders have trained the troops well, and they knew how to react in a crisis.

The troops want the perpetrators to be found and severely punished. But more importantly, they want to prove they will not be deflected from their mission. By the time I arrived, four days after attack, they had already restored the full operating tempo. Operation Southern Watch hardly missed a beat. The No-Fly Zone below the 32nd parallel is still in force.

#### WHAT WENT WRONG?

Why, in the face of serious concern about force protection and extensive measures to improve force protection, did the Khobar Towers tragedy occur? I have asked General Wayne Downing to make an independent assessment of the circumstances surrounding the bombing. I expect to be able to give you a complete answer to this question when General Downing's assessment is completed in August. But based on what I have already learned, I can give you a partial answer.

First of all, the security measures we introduced after the bombing of the Saudi National Guard facility were focused on a threat less powerful than actually occurred.

Second, and partially related to our understatement of the threat, our local commanders, for a variety of reasons, had not completed some of the measures that were prescribed and which they agreed needed to be done.

Why did we focus on a threat which proved to be understated?

For the decades of American presence there it seemed that Saudi Arabia was safe from the terrorist violence occurring in other countries in the Middle East. During the 5 years since Desert Storm we have maintained an increased military presence, but the security provisions for the residences and offices of our personnel were roughly comparable to those for the forces based in Germany, Japan, or even the United States. Yet even then we knew that the mission we are conducting in Saudi Arabia, so vital to us, is opposed by others. Certainly it is opposed by Iraq and Iran, since our forces in the region deter them from actions they might otherwise take. Our very presence in Saudi Arabia is opposed by some religious extremists in that country, some of whom are willing to use violent measures to drive us out.

In November of last year a group of Saudi religious extremists attacked the office of the U.S. program manager for the Saudi National Guard in Riyadh with a car bomb, killing five Americans. That was a wake-up call. At that point we made what we believed to be a prudent judgment that this attack might not be an isolated event, but a new trend and a High terrorist threat level to Saudi Arabia. In response to this judgment, we conducted analyses of the vulnerability of our forces in Saudi Arabia. In particular the Air Force's Office of Special Investigations conducted a vulnerability analysis of the Khobar Towers that was completed in January of this year. It was informed by full access to the intelligence information on the terrorist threat to Saudi Arabia.

But the intelligence information, while voluminous and pointing to a high threat level, was also fragmentary and inconclusive. It did not provide the user with any



specific threat, but rather laid out a wide variety of threat alternatives. Consequently our commanders received recommendations to take a variety of actions. Many actions were completed prior to the June attack. Some focused on preventing an attack similar to the November bombing. Other actions focused on preventing attacks of a completely different nature, and may have prevented a different type of attack from taking place. My assessment is that our commanders were trying to do right, but given the inconclusive nature of the intelligence, had a difficult task to know what to plan for.

The critical limitation on anti-terrorist intelligence is warning on specific terrorist operations. You need a critical level of intelligence to prevent an attack. Short of that level of information, commanders have to plan for a wide range of cases.

This attack turned out to be ten times as powerful as the previous attack. It is evident from what is already known about the attack that the bombers were well organized, had sophisticated training, did extensive practice, and had access to military quality explosives and detonating devices. Of course the investigation is still underway, but I believe that is reasonable to assume that these bombers had extensive support from an experienced and well-financed international terrorist organization. Therefore, I believe that it is prudent to conclude that we are now facing a significantly higher and more sophisticated threat than was evidenced by the bombing of the Saudi National Guard facility in Riyadh.

Why were the recommended security measures not yet completed at the time of the attack?

Based on his view of the threat and the vulnerability analysis done by OSI, the base commander undertook an extensive set of security measures at Khobar Towers. General Peay will describe them to you in his testimony. Some of these measures were still in process, but most of them had been accomplished at the time the attack was made on Khobar Towers. Indeed, the security measures that were already in place undoubtedly saved dozens, if not hundreds of lives. However, it is also undoubtedly true that significantly fewer casualties would have occurred if all of the prescribed security measures had been implemented by the time of the attack. General Downing's investigation will shed more light on why some of the recommended measures had not yet been completed, but it seems clear that local commanders would have put a higher priority on timing if they had perceived a threat as sophisticated and powerful as actually occurred.

#### WHAT CAN WE DO TO RESPOND TO THE THREAT?

General Peay, in his testimony, will tell you what additional security measures we have underway to deal with this higher threat level. Additionally, General Downing is charged not only with assessing the Khobar Towers attack, but with recommending to us actions that should be taken to reduce our vulnerability to this terrorist threat, not just in Saudi Arabia, but throughout the Central Command.

But even before I receive General Downing's assessment, I can tell you that the changes required to deal with this level of threat will be complex, expensive, and take many months to implement. It is fundamentally difficult to provide protection against such a threat, particularly in an urban environment. Therefore I have instructed General Peay to include in his recommendations a plan to move our military forces out of Riyadh and other urban environments where it is difficult to provide adequate physical security.

But we should not limit our response to this outrageous attack to passive security measures. We should also go on the offensive. International terrorists do pose a more sophisticated threat to us, but they are also more vulnerable than local terrorists to intelligence penetration. Therefore we must intensify our intelligence targeting of international terrorists in the Mideast. The goal is to discover their identities, their sources of funds, their materiel flow, and their plans, in order to preempt them before they attack. George Tenet will talk more about this in the classified part of the hearing.

But whatever we do, and however much we invest in anti-terrorist activities, we cannot eliminate the risk. No one works harder at anti-terrorism than the British and the Israelis, and they have not yet found an adequate protection for their citizens from car bombs detonated in an urban environment. We must expect that the terrorists will not give up on the goal of driving us from Saudi Arabia and the region. We must not let them succeed. We must not cut and run in the face of these attacks.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The risks of our mission in the Gulf are real, but the mission justifies the risks. To recognize the importance of our presence, we have only to think back to 1990

when we had no deployed forces on the ground in the region. We ended up having to deploy more than half a million troops to protect Saudi Arabia and expel Saddam Hussein's forces from Kuwait. We won the war, but at a great cost in dollars and lives. It is far better to deter a war than to have to fight one. It is my judgment that this mission is worth the risks associated with it. Every day we have a variety of aircraft in the air over Iraq. Every day those operations include risks. Every day there will be risk of a terrorist attack. But we must take every action we can to minimize those risks.

Whose responsibility is it to minimize the risk to our troops? Force protection is the responsibility of everyone in the chain of command. That responsibility runs from the Commander-in-Chief of the Central Command at McDill AFB in Florida, to his subordinate commanders in the field, to unit commanders and on down to the lowest ranking non-commissioned officer.

But ultimately the responsibility is mine, as Secretary of Defense. I take this responsibility very seriously. The safety and welfare of our forces is my highest priority. But I assume that responsibility with the sober recognition that we can only reduce, and not eliminate, the risk. We are determined to reduce that risk, in Saudi Arabia and throughout the world, wherever American forces serve to protect America's security.

Am I confident that everything is in place to prevent such an incident from happening again? No I am not. I never will be. Nor do I want any of our commanders to be complacent. What our military personnel do for a living is inherently dangerous. Every training exercise carries risks. Every deployment involves risks—even when the deployments are to regions far more benign than the Persian Gulf. Every time I sign a deployment order—for a real mission or just an exercise—the safety of our personnel is foremost in my mind. This is the heaviest burden I carry. I know that my decision will put someone's life in danger. But it is a responsibility I cannot avoid by refusing to authorize the deployment. Safety concerns cannot paralyze us. When a tragedy happens, we mourn the deaths and share the grief of the families. But then we have to carry on, and we have taken the actions that will reduce risks in the future.

But no action we or the Saudis can take will provide absolute guarantees of the complete safety and security of each of our personnel in Saudi Arabia. The mission to which both our governments are committed involves the vital national security interests of both nations. Enhancing physical barriers, increasing vigilance and improving intelligence will go far as precautions against such attacks, but we can never fashion absolute defenses against the criminals and terrorists who seek to attack us. Just as our personnel are dedicated to the cause of freedom, others are dedicated to striking at its very core.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to sum up with four points.

First, the Khobar Towers bombing was a tragedy that revealed vulnerabilities in the force protection measures we had taken.

Second, we can expect further attacks on our facilities in the command. Therefore we are undertaking a major program to improve our force protection measures throughout the command. This will include plans to rebase our forces, now located in urban areas.

Third, we must capture and punish the bombers. If we identify another nation as the source of the bombing, we should retaliate.

Fourth, we must not let the bombers drive us out of the Gulf region. The mission there is vital to our national security interest and must be continued.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE,  
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE,  
Washington, DC, July 3, 1996.

Hon. STROM THURMOND, *Chairman,*  
*Committee on Armed Services,*  
*United States Senate,*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I have just returned from a visit to the airbase in Dhahran and the Khobar Towers residence complex. I saw first-hand the appalling devastation of the bomb attack and met with our military men and women whose steadfast commitment to a military presence in the region is inspiring. They clearly understand that the security of the region is vital to the United States.

During my visit, I met with King Fahd and Minister of Defense Prince Sultan who assured me that Saudi authorities would work closely with U.S. authorities in the investigation of these terrorist attacks and an improving the security of our forces. The Saudis to date have supported our requests for cooperation. We are both committed to finding and punishing the perpetrators.

Last Friday I appointed General Wayne Downing (USA, Retired) to conduct an assessment of the facts and circumstances surrounding the bombing. I have asked General Downing to complete his report within 45 days. A copy of the terms of reference is attached. At the conclusion of General Downing's assessment, we will share his overall findings with your committee. We will keep you informed on the progress of his assessment as it develops.

Attached is a point paper providing information on the Dhahran incident. In addition, I will be pleased to meet with you and Members of the committee to discuss this matter in greater detail.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. PERRY.

Attachment: As stated.

cc: Honorable Sam Nunn,

*Ranking Minority Member.*

#### DHAHRAN BOMBING

*What Happened:* On 25 June 1996, a tanker truck stopped outside the perimeter fence in front of Building 131 of the Khobar Towers Compound. Two individuals were observed fleeing the truck into a nearby getaway car by U.S. Security Forces positioned on the roof of Building 131. Recognizing what was taking place, the security policemen immediately began evacuating the building. They succeeded in clearing the top two floors before the truck exploded. Security measures in place kept the truck 35 yards away from the building which significantly reduced the number of casualties. One building 100 yards away also suffered damage with one fatality.

*What We Had Done to Prevent Such An Attack Before It Occurred:* Since the OPMSANG bombing in November 1995, numerous enhancements to security were implemented at the Khobar Tower Compound. Some of the more significant measures include:

- Limiting vehicle access to and movement within the compound
- Increasing and enhancing U.S. Security Police posts and patrols inside the compound
- Repairing the entire fence line including installation of concertina wire and pruning of vegetation
- Reinforcing security awareness through media channels on base
- Positioning additional "Jersey" barriers at the entrances and along the fence Line of Khobar Towers
- Increasing Saudi patrols outside fence line
- Creating procedures with local police for base security to check vehicle license plates
- Adding two M-60 machine gun bunkers to cover the inbound and outbound traffic from the main gate.
- Providing two 2.5 ton trucks to sea off the entrance, if required.
- Ensuring bomb dog teams were available both day and night.
- Installing a backup emergency light signal to indicate a problem if radios are out.
- Placing two tire shredders on the main gate to stop or hinder a possible car bomber from entering the main area of Khobar Towers.
- Filling 25,000 sandbags to build fighting positions.

*What We Have Done Since To Prevent Another Such Attack:* Since the bombing, additional security measures have been taken to protect U.S. personnel in the region, including:

- Extending "Jersey" barrier line at Khobar Towers out to approximately 400 feet from the buildings to the north with the consent and assistance of the Saudis.
- Removing personnel from buildings near perimeters, or to rooms that do not face the perimeter, where feasible.
- Extending standoff distances to the maximum extent possible at other sites.
- Installing Mylar on buildings vulnerable to blast effects.
- Taking additional security measures in Bahrain and Jeddah.
- Reformulating standards for blast protection.

USCINCENT has required subordinate commanders to report their actions taken and immediate plans for further protective measures by 2 July, 1996.



## *Medical Status Report*

### *U.S. Casualties*

There were 19 fatalities in the bombing. The 450 personnel were treated for injury, with 148 being sent to the hospital. Of the 148 sent to the hospital 69 were admitted. The 43 were medically evacuated to Landstuhl, Germany. Currently, one patient remains in the hospital at Dhahran, 14 patients remain in the hospital at Landstuhl. All other patients have returned to the United States.

### *Foreign Casualties*

The reported number of foreign nationals who were injured: Saudis—147; Bangladeshis—118; Egyptians—4; Jordanians—2; Indonesians—2; and Filipinos—2.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE,  
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE,  
Washington, DC, June 28, 1996.

Memorandum for Gen. Wayne A. Downing, U.S. Army.

Subject: Khobar Towers Bomb Attack Assessment.

You are hereby appointed to conduct an assessment of the facts and circumstances surrounding the bomb attack on the Khobar Towers, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, on June 25, 1996. The attached Charter for the assessment shall guide your efforts in this matter.

I have tasked the Joint Chiefs of staff to secure the necessary technical and administrative support from the Services, Defense agencies, and combatant commands. You should identify your support requirements, to include staff, office facilities, legal support, and technical assistance, to the chairman. You are authorized travel, to include the use of military airlift where available, to such places and facilities as may be required to complete the assessment.

It is essential that your assessment begin as soon as possible so that I can advise the President and the Congress of the conclusions reached at the earliest opportunity.

WILLIAM J. PERRY.

## ASSESSMENT OF KHOBAR TOWERS BOMBING

### CHARTER

#### *I. Purpose*

Examine the facts and circumstances surrounding the June 25, 1996, bomb attack against the Khobar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, and assess whether and, if so, the extent to which the casualties and damage sustained was the result of inadequate security infrastructures, policies, or systems, and recommend measures to minimize casualties and damage from such attacks in the future. Also, evaluate security infrastructures, policies, and systems at other U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) facilities in the AOR, and recommend measures to prevent similar attacks or to minimize casualties and damage there from.

#### *II. Report*

A. Submit a detailed written report of the assessment, including findings and recommendations, to the Secretary of Defense within 45 days. If more than 45 days are necessary to complete the assessment, notify the Secretary of Defense of that fact and the amount of additional time required.

B. Prepare and present such briefings pertaining to the assessment as may be directed by the Secretary of Defense.

C. Portions of the report may be classified. All practical steps shall be taken to separate classified information from that which need not be classified.

#### *III. Scope of Assessment*

The assessment will include an examination of all relevant facts and circumstances surrounding the Khobar Towers bomb attack, including (but not limited to) the following:

A. The adequacy of the security infrastructure and systems at the Khobar Towers and other facilities in USCENTCOM's AOR, including (but not limited to) the sufficiency of structural measures, perimeter security, guard services, and warning systems.

B. The clarity of the division of responsibility between the Government of Saudi Arabia and USCENTCOM for security of the Khobar Towers (both inside and outside the facility), and the division of such responsibilities be-

tween USCENTCOM and host-nation authorities elsewhere in USCENTCOM's AOR.

C. The sufficiency and effectiveness of U.S. intelligence of terrorist activity in the USCENTCOM AOR.

D. The adequacy of USCENTCOM's security policies, including procedures for assessing vulnerabilities, educating and training assigned personnel and their dependents, and disseminating information of potential terrorist attacks.

E. The adequacy of funding and resources for security at the Khobar Towers facility and other facilities in the USCENTCOM AOR.

F. The adequacy of coordination on intelligence and anti-terrorism countermeasures among USCENTCOM, friendly governments in the AOR, chiefs of appropriate U.S. missions, and other friendly governments with personnel at U.S. facilities in the USCENTCOM AOR.

G. Recommended measures to prevent future terrorist attacks or to minimize the magnitude of casualties and damages.

#### *IV. Personal Culpability*

This assessment is *not* a criminal investigation or inquiry, nor is it intended to determine personal responsibility or fault. Its purpose is to determine the adequacy of security at the Khobar Towers facility and other facilities in the USCENTCOM AOR and to recommend measures for improving security to prevent future terrorist attacks or to minimize the casualties and damage caused thereby. If, during the course of the assessment, information is received establishing probable cause to conclude that a U.S. employee or a member of the U.S. military has breached his or her duty, the information will be forwarded to the Commander in Chief, USCENTCOM, for disposition.

#### *V. Departmental Support*

A. The department of Defense, including without limitation the services, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Defense agencies, and the combatant commands shall fully cooperate with and provide such overall support and assistance to the assessment as may be required. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff shall provide technical and administrative assistance as needed. The Chairman is authorized to seek the support of the services, defense agencies, and combatant commands to furnish this technical and administrative support.

B. All relevant departmental information and documentation shall be available to General Downing and his staff during the assessment.

C. Travel is authorized to such places and facilities as may be required to complete the assessment.

D. Testimony should be taken under oath and a verbatim record of testimony should be made as deemed appropriate.

Chairman THURMOND. I want to repeat again that the full statement of the witnesses, the entire statement, will go in the record. We ask the witnesses to limit their oral statements to 7 minutes. We have a long hearing here and the Senators have questions they wish to propound. General, you may proceed.

### **STATEMENT OF GEN. JOHN M. SHALIKASHVILI, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF**

General SHALIKASHVILI. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the committee, let me begin by once again expressing my sympathies to the families of those who lost their lives in this tragedy that we are here to discuss, and to wish a very speedy recovery to those who were wounded in this incident.

Mr. Chairman, in the past 18 months, the terrorist threat in the Persian Gulf region has gone from a relatively low level to a very high level today. Thus, it is now a much more difficult challenge that we face, one where we must balance risks to our vital national interests along with these heightened threats to our forces.

But balancing risks is an integral part of my job. As the principal military advisor to the Secretary of Defense and to the President,

I direct strategic planning, monitor contingency operations and assist the President and the Secretary in providing strategic direction to our forces.

Out of all of my responsibilities, nothing is more important to me than to properly formulate military missions and shape military forces whenever our men and women have to be asked to go in harms way, and, at the same time, to ensure that we continue to look for better ways to protect our forces in the execution of the many and varied missions here and abroad.

Force protection, safeguarding the health, safety and physical security of our men and women in uniform and their families is a key concern each time I recommend a plan for approval or bring an operational deployment order to the Secretary for his signature.

That was true when we sent our forces to Haiti and it is, as Secretary Perry already mentioned, why we wear our kevlar helmets and flak vests in the summer's heat in Bosnia. Details related to force protection, those ranging from special training and rules of engagement, to operating procedures, are always a top priority whether we are conducting a noncombatant evacuation in Liberia, as we just recently did, or operating out of Saudi Arabia to deter Saddam Hussein.

During my trip to the Gulf in late May of this year, I found awareness of the terrorist threat and an appreciation of the importance of force protection to be high throughout the region. Given the expected threat, I found that all of the units I visited had implemented extensive force protection measures, both in terms of physical protection and in terms of antiterrorism education and training.

Because actions to deter terrorists must be continuous, and we must never be satisfied that we have done enough, additional measures were in the works to make security even better.

Less than a month before the bombing, I visited King Abdul Aziz Airbase in Dhahran and spoke with some of the very same airmen who lived in the Khobar Towers. They were, like all of our young service men and women I visit around the world, a most impressive group, with high morale and a sense that what they were doing was important to our nation and very much in the interest of peace and security.

Indeed, the ones I talked with knew theirs was a vital mission. They knew that the 4404th Composite Wing was there flying daily missions over Iraq to deter Saddam Hussein. They understood as well that if they were not there, that one day we might again have to fight to defend our interests and our regional allies, and most likely do so at great expense to American treasure and American lives.

These members of the 4404th Composite Wing, with whom I spoke, also understood terrorism and the need for constant vigilance. I am certain they knew that the terrorist threat was real.

While all of our forces worldwide are sensitive to terrorism, those in Saudi Arabia were especially alert, particularly after the November 1995 car bombing at the building called Office of Program Manager-Saudi Arabia National Guard (OPM-SANG).



This tragic incident was the first such loss of American lives since Desert Storm. Suddenly we faced a different threat in Saudi Arabia and we had to redouble our effort to increase our defenses.

So, first, as an immediate measure, the Secretary directed on 14 November, the day after the OPM-SANG bombing, that all DOD, activities at home and abroad, review their physical security and antiterrorism procedures. The purpose of this review was not only to heighten our current security awareness and security posture, but to establish as well a long-term mindset that would help reduce the chances of a terrorist attack against U.S. personnel and facilities in the future.

While the regional commanders proceeded with their reviews, the Secretary and I formed a DOD Antiterrorism Task Force, and, as part of this effort, we dispatched a general officer-level team to every overseas unified command to assess security needs and antiterrorism practices with a special emphasis on high-threat areas.

This task force aimed to develop policy recommendations that would strengthen DOD's antiterrorism efforts. Last month, the Secretary approved the findings of the task force and work has begun on its recommendations.

Additionally, since OPM-SANG falls under the authority of the U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, we participated as well, at general officer level, in the State Department's Accountability Review Board, whose purpose was to examine the security-related specific aspects of the OPM-SANG bombing and to report its findings and recommendations.

We are continuing to work hand-in-hand with the State Department in implementing the recommendations of their report. Of course, today, we are giving General Downing's review of the circumstances surrounding the Khobar Towers bombing every measure of our support. It is important to note here that General Peay, himself, had asked for this outside review.

Given the ubiquitous and ever-changing nature of terrorism, antiterrorism must be a continuous process. We can always improve, and we will never stop trying. However, in the future we must face one hard fact: We will have more terrorist incidents.

Terrorism will always seek the weak link and take the most indirect approach to its ends. It will make every effort to strike at the seams, seeking shock effect and publicity over military utility. Terrorists will continue to be as patient as they are destructive. No one, not even the Israelis who have more experience than any other people in dealing with terrorism, has figured out a way to decisively defeat it in the near-term.

Yet, in the areas where our interests are great, we must accept that risk, while, at the same time, continuing to work consistently and methodically to reduce the risk to our men and women in uniform. The Downing assessment is another step in that continuous process. But in the end, we cannot let acts of terrorism deter us from pursuing our vital interests.

That said, with your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would now like to ask General Peay to outline for you his perspective, his command's actions in connection with this tragic event, and his efforts

to minimize the risk of terrorism to the forces of Central Command.

[The prepared statement of General Shalikashvili follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY GEN. JOHN M. SHALIKASHVILI

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee: It is ordinarily a pleasure to come here to talk with you. Today, however, it is a very painful subject for all of us here, and indeed for all of the members of our Armed Forces. For we are well aware that we are here because terrorists have hit our forces in Saudi Arabia for the second time in seven months, taking the lives of 19 airmen, and altering the security climate in this region of vital interest to the United States.

So let me once again express my deepest sympathies to the families of the brave airmen who lost their lives, and my wishes for a speedy recovery to those who were wounded.

In the past 18 months, the terrorist threat in the Persian Gulf region has gone from a relatively low level to a high level of threat. Thus, today, our challenge in this region is to continue to protect our vital interests, but to do so in the face of this significant new terrorist threat. It is now a much more difficult challenge, one where we must balance risk to our vital national interests along with the risk to our forces.

Balancing risks is an integral part of my job. As the principal military advisor to the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Council, and the President, I direct strategic planning, oversee contingency operations, and assist the President and the Secretary in providing strategic direction for our Armed Forces.

Out of all of my responsibilities, nothing is more important to me, than to properly formulate missions and shape military forces, whenever our men and women have to be asked to go in harm's way, and, at the same time, to insure that we continually look for better ways to protect our forces in the execution of their many, varied missions, here and abroad.

In all my travels around the world, I am continually reminded just how valuable our service men and women are to our country, and how precious their lives are, both to their families and to the American people.

Force protection, safeguarding the health, safety, and physical security of our men and women in uniform and their family members, is a key concern each time I recommend the approval of a plan or bring an operational deployment order to the Secretary for his signature.

That was true when we had to send our forces to Haiti, and it is why we wear kevlar helmets and flak vests in the summer's heat in Bosnia. Details related to force protection, from special training, to rules of engagement, to operating procedures are always a top priority, whether we are conducting a non-combatant evacuation in Liberia, or operating out of Saudi Arabia to deter Saddam Hussein from once again invading Kuwait.

Knowing that we will do our best to try to protect them when they are in harm's way is one important reason why our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines have performed so well, and why we have had so many operational successes. That was true during Desert Storm, and it is true today in Bosnia, in Korea, and in the Persian Gulf region.

During my trip to the Gulf in late May of this year, I found awareness of the terrorist threat, and an appreciation of the importance of force protection, to be high, throughout the region. Given the expected threat, I found that all of the units that I visited had implemented extensive force protection measures, both in terms of physical protection, and in terms of antiterrorism education and training. Because actions to deter terrorists must be continuous, and we must never be satisfied that we have done enough, additional measures were in the works to make security even better.

Less than a month before the bombing, I talked at King Abdul Aziz Airbase in Dhahran with some of the very same airmen who lived in the Khobar Towers. They were, like all of our young service men and women I visit around the world, a most impressive group, with high morale and a sense that what they were doing was important to our nation and very much in the interest of peace and security.

Indeed, they knew theirs was a vital mission. They knew that the 4404th Composite Wing was there flying daily missions over Iraq to deter Saddam Hussein from once again invading his neighbors and threatening the world's energy supply. And they understood as well, that if they were not there, that one day we might again have to fight to defend our regional allies, and most likely do so at great expense in American treasure and American lives.



These members of the 4404th Composite Wing with whom I spoke also understood terrorism and the need for constant vigilance. I am certain, they knew that the terrorist threat was real and because of good training, because of the many security improvements that they had made, and because of the rooftop sentries at Khobar Towers, a great number of lives were saved.

While all of our forces, worldwide, are sensitive to terrorism, those in Saudi Arabia were especially alert after the November 1995 car bombing of the Office of the Program Manager for the Saudi Arabian National Guard modernization, or the so-called OPM SANG building. This terrorist act in Riyadh killed 5 Americans and 2 third country nationals.

This tragic loss of life was indeed a wake-up call for that nation. Suddenly we faced a different terrorist threat in Saudi Arabia, and we had to redouble our efforts to increase our defenses:

First, as an immediate measure, the Secretary directed on 14 November, the day after the OPM SANG bombing, that all DOD activities, at home and abroad, review their physical security and antiterrorism procedures. The purpose of this review was not only to heighten our current security awareness and security posture, but to establish, as well, a long-term mindset that would reduce the chances of a successful terrorist attack against U.S. personnel and facilities in the future.

Second, the Secretary and I formed a DOD Antiterrorism Task Force. As part of this effort, we dispatched a General officer-level team to every overseas, unified command to assess security needs, and antiterrorism practices, with a special emphasis on high threat areas.

This Task Force aimed to develop policy recommendations that would strengthen DOD's antiterrorism efforts. Last month, the Secretary approved the findings of this Task Force, and work was begun on its recommendations. Recently, this Antiterrorism Task Force report was released to the field.

The Task Force's plan identified immediate and near-term changes required to reorient the way DOD personnel think and respond to terrorist threats. Among the many recommendations of this report are:

- The development of a separate, OSD-managed program element for high priority antiterrorism projects;
- The development of numerous changes in intelligence procedures and the interagency adoption of DOD threat assessment methods;
- The inclusion of terrorism scenarios in military exercises of all types; and
- The development of DOD-wide training aids, including a new antiterrorism handbook and a command information video.

The Services were also directed to raise the priority of antiterrorism readiness in their budgets, and to make it a special interest item in all Inspector General inspections.

Additionally, since OPM SANG falls under the authority of the U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, we participated in the State Department's Accountability Review Board, whose purpose was to examine the security-related aspects of the bombing and to report its findings and recommendations.

We are continuing to work hand-in-hand with the State Department in implementing the recommendations of their report. Given that many of the policy issues uncovered here concern interdepartmental cooperation abroad, the report clarifies Department of State and Department of Defense responsibilities overseas, and will ensure closer coordination between the Chiefs of Mission in various countries and the regionally-oriented, unified commanders.

Of course, today, we are already giving General Downing's assessment every measure of support that we can. It is important to note here that General Peay, the regional commander-in-chief, himself asked for this review.

But, given the ubiquitous and ever-changing nature of the terrorism, antiterrorism must be a continuous process. We can always improve, and we will never stop trying. However, in the future, we must face one hard fact: we will have more terrorist incidents.

Terrorism will always seek the weak link, and take the most indirect approach to its ends. It will make every effort to strike at the seams, seeking shock effect and publicity over military utility. Terrorists will continue to be as patient as they are destructive. No one, not even the Israelis, who have more experience than any other people in dealing with terrorism, has figured out a way to decisively defeat it in the near term.

In the areas where our interests are great, we must accept that risk, while, at the same time, continuing to work consistently and methodically to reduce the risk to our men and women in uniform to the greatest extent possible. The Downing as-

assessment is another step in that continuous process. But, in the end, we can not let acts of terrorism deter us from pursuing our vital interests.

Let me now ask that General Peay outline for you his perspective, his command's actions in connection with this tragic event, and his efforts to minimize the risk of terrorism to our forces in Central Command.

Chairman THURMOND. General Peay.

# **STATEMENT OF GEN. J.H. BINFORD PEAY III, COMMANDER IN CHIEF, UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND**

General PEAY. Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

Let me begin by expressing on behalf of all service men and women assigned to U.S. Central Command my deepest condolence to the loved ones of our comrades-in-arms killed and wounded. While no words can adequately console our families during this tragic time, we can take comfort in remembering that these young Americans were struck while heroically serving our nation.

Accomplishing our missions in the region in general, and in Saudi Arabia in particular, means achieving success in a very complex operational environment. The first part involves understanding the Saudi culture and the way of doing business. The second part involves the dynamics of managing operational risks.

Our relationship with the Saudis is based on promoting mutual interests. We are not colonizing their country. We do not seek to infringe on their culture. We respect their way of life. But we do not intentionally allow these efforts to endanger our service men and women.

Over the last several decades, our Government has considered Saudi Arabia one of the safest countries in the world. Over 40,000 American civilians live and work in Saudi Arabia this morning. What is more, the U.S. military enjoys a close relationship with Saudi counterparts that is the envy of nations throughout the world.

What may appear as Saudi indifference or unwillingness to act on an issue is, in fact, a reflection of their different sense of time. Similarly, what may appear as foot-dragging by various levels of government is often a reflection of the compartmentalized nature of Saudi bureaucracy and decisionmaking.

Decisions at all levels of the Saudi Government are slow by U.S. standards and are often reached by consensus. In addition, the King's role as custodian of the two Holy Mosques produces intense Saudi sensitivity to issues involving their sovereignty. Our sensitivity to these dynamics produces a friendship and internal stability supportive of our national interests.

Another aspect of the operational climate that must be understood is the manner in which I, as a theater commander, and my subordinate commanders manage operational risk. Our relatively small forward presence reflects our recognition that local societies can be easily oversaturated, producing the very instability that we seek to prevent.

The terrorist attack on Khobar Towers reflects the changing nature of the terrorist threat in Saudi Arabia. Though some have attempted to compare this bombing with the suicide attack on the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983, the differences are simply striking. Saudi Arabia is a viable, prosperous, stable country. Prior

to the bombing of OPM-SANG last year, there were very few terrorist incidents directed against Americans within the kingdom.

It is not in the grips of a civil war. It does not suffer the destruction and chaos associated with a multitude of warring extremist groups. It is not caught in the middle of a conflict between warring nations such as was Lebanon with respect to Syria and Israel. U.S. Forces are not engaged in active combat actions against local military groups as was the United States in Lebanon where Marines were employing small arms, artillery, naval gunfire and air strikes against the Druze and Amal Shiite militiamen.

We recognize, however, that Middle Eastern terrorism has evolved over the years. There are several groups operating within our area of responsibility and interest, groups like Hamas, Hizballah, Al-Jihad, most receiving financing, weapons and sanctuary from countries like Iran and Sudan.

We are seeing a growth in transnational groups comprised of Islamic extremists, many of whom fought in Afghanistan and now drift to other countries with the aim of establishing antiwestern, fundamentalist regimes by destabilizing traditional governments through attacks on the United States and western targets. Their small, cellular structure and tendency to operate independently of state sponsors complicate detection of their activities.

We also are sensitive to the emergence over the last few years of anti-Saudi Government groups. But the direct relationship of such groups with transnational terrorist cells remains unclear.

Let me suggest these initial thoughts on the terrorist attack on Khobar Towers. First, Central Command and subordinate commands competently fulfilled their intelligence, analysis, collection, and dissemination responsibilities prior to the Khobar Towers bombing.

CENTCOM, its subordinate commands, and the interagency conduct thorough intelligence work 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. I personally review key intelligence information on all threats, to include the terrorist threat, every day, 7 days a week. The same information is shared with all senior commanders, to include those in Saudi Arabia.

Difficulties arise in detecting specific acts of terror before they occur. The terrorist is a criminal. The terrorist is not a soldier. He strikes indiscriminately at the target of his choosing, with any means, at any time. All targets are legitimate in his eyes. He seeks to inflict as much damage as possible to horrify and shock the local population and global audience and to embarrass the leaders of a country. Under the circumstances, there is no way to achieve absolute security for our military people or our civilian citizens living abroad.

An initial review of the intelligence relating specifically to Saudi Arabia and Khobar Towers in the months prior to the Khobar Towers bombing reveals an increase in suspected surveillance, but no clear indication of an impending major terrorist attack.

Second, Central Command, its component commands, and other U.S. military organizations in the kingdom have competently accomplished their missions and command responsibilities prior and subsequent to the OPM-SANG and Khobar Towers bombing.



The November 1995 OPM-SANG bombing was a watershed, demarcating a new escalation in the terrorist threat. Soon after the bombing, I met with our ambassadors in the region, including those in Egypt, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE and Pakistan, to discuss shared security responsibilities.

Concurrently, I met with all of my senior component commanders and with senior U.S. military leaders in regional countries to review the terrorist threat, the chain-of-command responsibilities and legal and military force protection requirements. Subordinate commanders use these meetings to share their concerns on force protection and to brainstorm additional safeguards. In addition, I raised the threat from medium to high and directed a theaterwide reassessment of security of our facilities in the region.

Force protection is complicated because each country in the region confronts different types of threats and reflects unique internal, political and social conditions. What is more—urbanization, road networks, availability of facilities and time associated with completing all security precautions affects the speed with which we have completed security upgrades theaterwide.

Nevertheless, Central Command and its component commanders initiated a series of security-related inspections throughout the region. This is a daunting task when you consider that I am responsible for over 50 military facilities, large facilities, and sites for combatants in the region and, between the chiefs of mission and myself, hundreds and hundreds of facilities and housing areas for military noncombatants.

We have completed 50 assessments since January 1996, assessments that have led to further security enhancements. As in the case with any military defense, we are always improving our positions, continually collecting and analyzing intelligence, replacing sandbags, enhancing perimeters, installing improved sensors and early warning devices, employing guard dogs, positioning machine guns, and increasing guards and patrols.

Consequently, what we observe at a time of a terrorist attack is a snapshot of a status of a facility at the time of attack, and I think this was somewhat true at Khobar Towers on 25 June 1996.

Third, Commanders JTF-SWA, Joint Southwest Asia, and 4404 Wing, provisional, responded with appropriate actions commensurate with the existing terrorist threat prior to the bombing.

During November 1995 and April 1996, the local military commanders responded to the OPM-SANG bombing by reassessing the security of Khobar Towers. They raised their own local threat conditions, as different from my threat conditions, threat warning, setting into motion more stringent force protection measures, measures designed to contend with various types of terrorist strikes to include a car bomb.

Enhancements included upgrading fences, adding additional concrete barriers along access roads, establishing a single well defended exit and entry point, clearing fields of view along perimeters, denying vehicles access to garages, blocking service roads between buildings, establishing no-parking areas near buildings, increasing U.S. patrols and guards, requesting and receiving additional Saudi guards and patrols, inspecting all mail, parcels, and

deliveries, and augmenting their staff with physical security agents.

Suspicious security-related incidents in early spring caused local commanders to enact even more rigorous security measures commencing 1 April 1996. These included adding more concrete barriers along the fence line, boosting standoff along perimeter fences, increasing Saudi patrols, getting the local police to check license plate numbers of suspicious vehicles, and positioning a manned, sand-filled dump truck to block the entrance in emergency.

To summarize, the local commanders implemented over 130 security improvements at Khobar Towers between November 1995 and June 1996. I will tell you, in talking with Norm Schwarzkopf several times, the facility at the time of the bombing was considerably better protected than it was throughout the Gulf War.

Fourth and last, our service men and women at Khobar Towers performed magnificently prior to and subsequent to the terrorist attack.

Prior to the attack, they labored in 115 degree heat to erect protective measures. Guards overcame the drudgery of their duty to maintain vigilance 24 hours a day and leaders continued to press for additional security measures up until the time of the attack.

In the aftermath of the explosion, as Secretary Perry has related, our people performed flawlessly in evacuating our wounded, performing triage and first aid, providing advanced medical care, and evacuating the building. As the smoke cleared on the morning of 26 June, our men and women continued their mission: pilots prepared to launch the air operations over southern Iraq, Patriot batteries remained steady and security personnel began to improve their positions.

In conclusion, when I arrived at Khobar Towers several days after the bombing, I was struck by the dedication and the selflessness of our people, their courageous effort to deal with the grief of losing friends, and their ability to overcome the confusion and continue their operational missions.

I was impressed with the work done by the Commander of the 4404th Wing, Brigadier General Schwalier. For it was this commander who had to deal with the immediate crisis, take care of the wounded and the dead, reorganize his security, coordinate with the Saudis, keep higher headquarters informed, and provide information to the media. It is easy to forget that his responsibilities extended beyond security at Khobar Towers. While he had a staff and subordinate commanders to assist him, he was, nevertheless, responsible for air operations in Iraq and in the Gulf. He had people living and working on 11 different sites in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, Oman, Qatar and the UAE. He had been aggressive over the last months in upgrading security at all of these sites.

Even with the additional physical security upgrades, we should recognize that we remain vulnerable to terrorist attacks. I do not believe that any amount of money or physical security upgrade alone can stop a determined terrorist. While terrorism has been a threat to our country for many years, it is evolving and it is growing increasingly more sophisticated.

We must keep in mind terrorism is both a criminal act and a way of war, and our service men and women are on the front line of terrorism throughout the Gulf.

We mourn for fallen comrades. It is the heartwrenching part of the profession of arms. Some forget that placing our service men and women in harm's way around the world involves risk. While the American people have every right to demand competence, character and leadership from our military commanders, they should not expect zero defects. Demanding such a rigid standard produces timid leaders, afraid to make tough decisions in crisis, unwilling to take the risks necessary for success in military operations. It is this zero defect mindset that creates conditions that will lead inevitably to failure in larger battles and perhaps even higher casualties.

Our nation has vital interests in the Middle East and the Gulf. The recent terrorist attack does not change that reality. We cannot withdraw, for doing so would reward terrorists and endanger our nation. We must remain engaged in the region, take the actions to ensure the safety of our service men and women abroad and focus on accomplishing our missions.

Thank you very much, sir.

[The prepared statement of General Peay follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT BY GEN. J. H. BINFORD PEAY III, USA

Good morning, Mr. Chairman. I appear before this committee to provide my insight as Commander in Chief, United States Central Command on the recent terrorist attack against U.S. military forces living at Khobar Towers Apartment Complex in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Let me begin by expressing on behalf of all service men and women assigned to USCENTCOM my deepest condolences to the loved ones of our comrades-in-arms killed and wounded. While no words can adequately console our families during this tragic time, we can take comfort in remembering that these young Americans were struck down while heroically serving our nation. It is patriots such as these that defeat our country's enemies in war, defend Americans abroad, protect the innocent, secure liberty, and promote peace in the world.

In the aftermath of this terrorist attack, the American people and our political leaders rightfully seek details on the incident. They want reassurance we acted prudently to protect our people. Soon after this attack, I asked Secretary of Defense Perry and General Shalikashvili to appoint an independent commission to assess the facts and circumstances surrounding the bomb attack on Khobar Towers, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. In response, General Downing has been named to conduct such a review. Additionally, immediately following the terrorist strike, I directed my Command to conduct a three-part force protection review stressing innovative approaches . . . nonlinear and "out of the box" thinking . . . to deal with the problem immediately and in the near- and long-terms. I am confident we will all have a more thorough understanding of the details surrounding the terrorist strike on Khobar Towers once these various assessments are complete.

With this in mind, I'll offer some initial thoughts on the terrorist bombing of Khobar Towers—views that may require revision later as a result of General Downing's Commission.

#### USCENTCOM THEATER ASSESSMENT—OVERVIEW

USCENTCOM's mission is clear and reflects the imperatives associated with defending our nation's enduring and vital interests in this complex region. We aim to accomplish the following:

- (1) Assure the security of American citizens and property abroad.
- (2) Ensure uninterrupted access to regional resources, freedom of navigation, and access to commercial markets.
- (3) Promote the security of our Arab friends and Israel and comprehensive Middle East Peace.
- (4) Assist friendly regional states in providing for their legitimate self-defense needs while enhancing their individual capabilities to contribute to collective defense.



(5) Deter attempts by hostile regional states to achieve geo-political gains by threat or use of force.

We perform this mission in an enormously complex and volatile region. Our area of responsibility consists of 20 countries, stretching from the Horn of Africa and Egypt through Jordan and the Gulf states to Afghanistan and Pakistan, and includes the waters of the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, Arabian Gulf, and western half of the Indian ocean. Home to 427 million people making up 17 different ethnic groups, 420 tribal groupings, six major languages, and hundreds of dialects, it is a place of ancient antagonisms and rivalries. On any given day, at least 13 internal or external conflicts plague the region, ranging from terrorists to border disputes to inter-state wars; conflicts rooted in long standing religious and tribal strife, border disputes, competition for resources, economic strains, and exploding populations.

Our multifaceted mission calls for us to conduct what I view as three distinct but inextricably linked "battles": Deep, Close, and Rear.

The Deep Battle is those long-term threats and requirements for U.S. forces, 5 to 10-years from now. It includes meeting the challenges of hostile states armed with ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction, an aggressive Iraq, an expansionist Iran, India and Pakistan's festering conflict, and stability and peaceful change within regional states.

Achieving our long-term goals means acquiring a multi-layered theater missile defense; assisting regional friends in standing-up effective defensive military forces; prepositioning ashore combat equipment and supplies that support accomplishment of our war plans; completing Defense Cooperation Agreements with regional states; and maintaining the right mix of lethal forward positioned U.S., air, ground, and sea forces.

The Close Battle involves near term threats to and requirements for U.S. forces from the present out to 5 years. It includes enforcement of maritime intercept operations against Iraq in support of UN sanctions, conducting Operation Southern Watch over southern Iraq, deterring Iraqi and Iranian aggression, combatting state-sponsored terrorism, improving military capabilities of regional friends, securing the flow of oil from the Gulf, and enforcing freedom of navigation on international waterways.

We do these things by maintaining a relatively small, robust, but effective mix of U.S. military forces. Under the Command of Navy Central Command/Fifth Fleet we routinely position in the region a carrier battle group, an amphibious ready group, and other ships armed with Tomahawk missiles. Under the command of Joint Task Force Southwest Asia, we maintain a lethal package of aircraft, located in various regional states, including Saudi Arabia. We also periodically position an Air Force Expeditionary Force to augment our other air resources. In addition, we rely on several Army patriot batteries for theater missile defense against ballistic missiles.

We ensure a rapid reaction to hostility by prepositioning military hardware and supplies for all services throughout the region, routinely exercising with regional friends, and carrying out aggressive intelligence work. Finally, we support the improvement of the legitimate defensive capabilities of our regional friends through security assistance programs and exercises.

Last, there is the Rear Battle, those immediate threats to and requirements for U.S. forces within regional states. It includes pursuing anti- and counter terrorism, responding to natural and manmade disasters, and promoting internal stability of regional friends. To handle this rear battle we must establish secure working and living areas, oversee aggressive security operations, engage in intelligence related activities, carry on military-to military relations, and conduct military exercises and security assistance programs.

Three battles—close, deep and rear—all of which must be won if we are to secure America's vital interest in the region. I am asked frequently which of these is the *first priority*. I say they are all first priority. We must fight these three battles simultaneously. *This is the context for understanding the terrorist threat in the region.* We do not have the luxury of focusing only on defending against terrorist attacks. Our forces are not in the region to defend a series of bases and enclaves. We are there to defend our nation's vital interests by deterring Iraqi and Iranian aggression . . . flying aerial missions in support of U.N. sanctions . . . enforcing maritime intercept operations . . . Yet, we must and will take appropriate measures to protect our personnel living in regional states. Three battles . . . each essential to mission accomplishment.

To direct these myriad of military requirements, I rely on several superb commanders organized into a clear chain of command.

- Commander, U.S. NAVAL FORCES CENTRAL COMMAND (VADM Redd), Bahrain
- Commander, U.S. AIR FORCES CENTRAL COMMAND (LTG Franklin), Shaw, AFB, S.C.
- Commander, U.S. ARMY FORCES CENTRAL COMMAND (LTG Arnold), Atlanta, Ga.
- Commander, US MARINE FORCES CENTRAL COMMAND (LTG Howell), Honolulu, Hawaii.
- Commander, SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND CENTRAL (BG Kensinger), MacDill AFB, Florida.

Within the region, VADM Redd is the only component commander positioned forward. The other component commanders rely on subordinates to oversee on-going military operations in the region. In this context, Commander, Joint Task Force Southwest Asia, MG Anderson, oversees operations in support of Operation Southern Watch over southern Iraq, reporting directly to headquarters, U.S. Central Command. Among his forces is CENTAF's 4404th Wing (Provisional), commanded by BG Schwalier. BG Schwalier's force lives and works out of various locations in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, UAE, and, this morning, Qatar. These two local commanders are responsible for discharging their combat missions, as well as overseeing force protection.

I believe that this chain of command is clear. My commander's intent on conduct of all missions is clear. Rules of engagement are clear. The daily assessment of internal and external threats is clear, to the best of our collective ability to determine them.

Accomplishing our missions in the region, in general, and in Saudi Arabia, in particular, means achieving success in a complex operational environment. I want to stress two parts of this environment. The first part involves understanding the Saudi culture and way of doing business. The second part involves the dynamics of managing operational risk.

We need to keep in mind that our relationship with the Saudis is based on promoting our mutual interests. We are not colonizing the country. We do not seek to infringe on their culture. We respect their way of life but, we do not intentionally allow these efforts to endanger our service men and women. Over the last several decades, our government has considered Saudi Arabia one of the safest countries in the world. Over 40,000 American civilians live and work in Saudi Arabia as of this morning. What's more, the U.S. military has consistently enjoyed a close relationship with the Saudis that is the envy of nations throughout the world.

What may appear as Saudi indifference or unwillingness to act on an issue is, in fact, a reflection of their different sense of time. Similarly, what may appear as foot dragging by various levels of government is often a reflection of the compartmentalized nature of Saudi bureaucracy and decision making. Decisions at all levels of the Saudi government are slow by U.S. standards and are often reached by consensus. In addition, the King's role as custodian of the two Holy Mosques produces intense Saudi sensitivity to issues involving their sovereignty. Our sensitivity to these dynamics promotes a friendship and internal stability supportive of U.S. national interests.

Another aspect of the operational climate that must be understood is the manner in which I, as a theater commander, and my subordinate commanders manage operational risk. Our relatively small forward presence reflects the recognition that local societies can be easily over saturated, producing the very instability we seek to prevent. In addition, the diverse threats found in the region require a blend of service capabilities involving air, ground, sea, and special operations forces. Concurrently, our nation's senior leaders are carefully managing America's smaller post-Cold War military forces to carry out diverse global missions while maintaining the readiness of the force. These factors require all of us in senior military positions to manage the risk of having the right combination of forces positioned forward; of having sufficient military punch to respond in times of crisis, as in VIGILANT WARRIOR in October 1994, or to transition to full-scale war; of watching the terrorist menace without ignoring the Iraqi and Iranian threats; and of providing a satisfying and safe quality of life for our service men and women.

#### NATURE OF THE THREAT

Understanding how and why the bombing at Khobar Towers occurred involves recognizing the changing nature of the terrorist threat in Saudi Arabia. Though some have attempted to compare the Khobar Towers bombing with the suicide attack on the U.S. Marine Barracks in Beirut in 1983, the differences are striking. Prior to the bombing of OPM-SANG last year, there were very few terrorist inci-



dents directed against Americans within the Kingdom. In 1991, terrorists attacked a bus in Jeddah, wounding three U.S. airmen. The perpetrators were subsequently caught and executed by the Saudis. Saudi Arabia is a prosperous, stable country. It is not in the grips of civil war. It does not suffer the destruction and chaos associated with a multitude of warring extremist groups. It is not caught in the middle of a conflict between warring nations, as was Lebanon with respect to Syria, Iran and Israel. U.S. forces are not engaged in active combat actions against local military groups, as was the United States in Lebanon, where Marines were employing small arms, artillery, naval gunfire and air strikes against Druze and Amal Shiite militiamen.

Still, we recognize that Middle Eastern terrorism has evolved over the years. There are several groups operating within our area of responsibility and interest, groups like Hamas, Hizballah, Al-Jihad. Most receive financing, weapons, and sanctuary from countries like Iran and Sudan. Recently we have seen growth in "transnational" groups comprised of fanatical Islamic extremists, many of whom fought in Afghanistan and now drift to other countries with the aim of establishing anti-western, fundamentalist regimes by destabilizing traditional governments and attacking U.S. and western targets. Their small, cellular structure and tendency to operate independently of state sponsors, complicate monitoring of their activities, to include preparation for terrorist attacks.

We also are sensitive to the emergence over the last few years of anti-Saudi government groups. Organizations like the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights (CDLR), based in London, and the Islamic Movement for Change (IMC), within Saudi Arabia, are believed to be behind recent violence in the Kingdom. But, their direct relationship with the transnational terrorist cells remains unclear.

#### USCINCENT ASSESSMENT ON FORCE PROTECTION

This theater strategic background frames the context for the terrorist attack on Khobar Towers and highlights the challenges our military leaders in Saudi Arabia confronted as they implemented force protection measures. Let me offer these initial thoughts:

First Point, USCENTCOM and subordinate commands competently fulfilled their intelligence, analysis, collection, and dissemination responsibilities prior to the Khobar Towers bombing.

USCENTCOM, its subordinate commands, and the inter-agency conduct thorough intelligence work seven-days a week, 24-hours a day. I personally review key intelligence information on all threats, to include the terrorist threat, every day. The same information is shared with all senior commanders, to include those in Saudi Arabia.

Difficulties arise in detecting specific acts of terror before they occur. The terrorist is a criminal, not a soldier. He strikes indiscriminately at the target of his choosing, with any means, at any time—all targets are legitimate in his eyes. He seeks to inflict as much damage as possible to horrify and shock the local population and global audience and to embarrass the leaders of a country. Under the circumstances, there is no way to achieve absolute security for our military people or civilian citizens living abroad.

An initial review of the intelligence relating specifically to Saudi Arabia and Khobar Towers in the months prior to the Khobar Towers Bombing reveals an increase in suspected surveillance but no clear indication of an impending major terrorist attack.

Second Point, USCENTCOM, its Component commands, and other U.S. military organizations in the Kingdom have competently accomplished their missions and command responsibilities prior and subsequent to the OPM-SANG and Khobar Towers bombing.

I have already explained the complexities associated with conducting our rear battle in Saudi Arabia and the difficulty associated with detecting the terrorist's method, time, and nature of attack.

Prior to the OPM-SANG bombing of November 1995, USCENTCOM pursued a vigorous anti-terrorist program in cooperation with the American Embassy and Saudi government. Given the large U.S. civilian population in the Kingdom and the history of relative freedom from terrorist attacks, we adopted prudent force protection measures, employing security fences, guarded entry points, and aggressive host nation and U.S. guards and patrols.

The November 1995 OPM-SANG bombing was a watershed, demarcating a new escalation in the terrorist threat. It was for the Saudis what the World Trade Center bombing was for Americans. Soon after the bombing, I met with our ambassadors in the region, including those in Egypt, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia,

Qatar, UAE and Pakistan, to discuss our shared security responsibilities in response to the changing terrorist threat and associated force protection measures. Concurrently, I met with my senior component commanders and with senior U.S. military leaders in regional countries to review the terrorist threat, chain of command responsibilities, and legal and military force protection requirements. Subordinate commanders used these meetings to share their concerns on force protection and to brainstorm additional safeguards. We used USCENCOM's mid-winter Commander's Conference to conduct follow-on discussions on force protection. In addition, I raised the threat level from "medium" to "high" and directed a theater-wide reassessment of security of our facilities in the region.

Upgrading specific force protection measures is complicated because each country in the region confronts different types of threats and reflects unique internal political and social conditions. What's more, urbanization, road networks, availability of facilities, and time associated with completing all security precautions has affected the speed with which we have undertaken security upgrades theater-wide. We have undertaken various security-related inspections throughout the region. A daunting task when you consider that I am responsible for over 50 military facilities and sites for combatants in the region and, between the chiefs of mission and myself, hundreds of other facilities and housing areas for military non-combatants. Nevertheless, we have completed fifty assessments since January 1996—assessments that led to further security enhancements. As is the case with any military defense: we are always improving our positions, always collecting and analyzing intelligence, continually replacing sandbags, enhancing perimeters, installing improved sensors and early warning devices, employing guard dogs, positioning machine guns, and increasing the number of guards and patrols. Consequently, what we observe at the time of a terrorist strike is a snap shot of the status of a facility at the time of attack. This was true for Khobar Towers on 25 June 1996.

Third Point, Commanders JTF-SWA and 4404 Wing (Provisional) responded with appropriate actions commensurate with the existing terrorist threat prior to the Khobar Towers bombing.

During November 1995—April 1996, the local military commanders responded to the OPM-SANG bomb by reassessing security at Khobar Towers, one of the largest of many facilities under their control. They raised their local threat conditions, setting into motion more stringent force protection measures - measures designed to contend with various types of terrorist strikes, to include a bomb with a blast effect similar to what was used during the OPM-SANG bombing. Enhancements included: upgrading fences; adding additional concrete barriers along access roads; establishing a single, well defended exit/entry point; clearing fields of view along perimeters; denying vehicles access to garages; blocking service roads between buildings; establishing no-parking areas near buildings within the compound; increasing U.S. patrols and guards; requesting and receiving additional Saudi guards and patrols; inspecting all mail, parcels, and deliveries; and augmenting their staff with physical security experts.

Suspicious security related incidents in early spring caused local commanders to enact even more rigorous security measures commencing 1 April 1996. These included adding more concrete barriers along the fence line, boosting stand-off along perimeter fences, increasing Saudi patrols outside of the fence line, getting the local police to check license plate numbers of suspicious vehicles, and positioning a manned sand-filled dump truck to provide an emergency block of the entrance.

To summarize, the local commander implemented over 130 security measures between November 1995 and 25 June 1996. Furthermore, additional force protection-related supplies were on order and more actions were being planned or awaiting Saudi approval when the terrorists struck on 25 June 1996.

Were these measures reasonable given the terrorist threat assessed at the time?

While reserving final judgment until official reviews are completed, we should note the terrorists never penetrated the compound; the size of the bomb was unprecedented for any of the Gulf States, equivalent to between 3,000 and 5,000 pounds of high explosive; and the terrorists were, in fact, detected as they positioned the truck containing the bomb, allowing a few minutes for our people to begin to clear the building. While tragically 19 of our servicemen were killed and several hundred others wounded, it could have been worse: several hundred could have been killed. The measures taken appear to have prevented this incident from being catastrophic.

Since the bombing on June 25th, we have worked mightily to further upgrade security at Khobar Towers—implementing over 90 measures thus far. These include working with Saudi officials to substantially increase the stand-off on the North and East sides of the perimeter, the areas deemed most vulnerable to another terrorist strike; removing personnel from all buildings near perimeters or moving them to rooms that do not overlook the perimeter; installing tire shredders near the main



gate; constructing additional machine gun bunkers to cover traffic at the main gate; making bomb dogs available day and night. In sum, our leaders are strengthening their defenses and preparing for another attack.

Fourth and last point, our service men and women at Khobar Towers performed magnificently prior to and subsequent to the terrorist attack.

Prior to the attack, they labored in 115 degree heat to erect protective measures. Guards overcame the drudgery of their duty to maintain vigilance 24-hours a day. Leaders continued to press for additional security measures up until the time of the attack.

In the aftermath of the explosion, our people performed flawlessly in evacuating the wounded, performing triage and first aid, providing more advanced medical care, and evacuating buildings. In addition, the Saudis acted immediately to evacuate our most seriously wounded to civilian hospitals and to augment our medical staffs. The actions of our people were inspirational.

As the smoke cleared in the morning of 26 June 1996, the men and women living at Khobar Towers continued their mission: pilots prepared to launch air operations over southern Iraq, patriot batteries remained ready, and security personnel immediately began to improve positions.

When I arrived at Khobar Tower three days after the bombing, I was struck by the dedication and selflessness of our people, their courageous effort to deal with the grief of losing friends, their ability to overcome the confusion to continue operational missions. I was impressed with the work done by the Commander of the 4404th, BG Schwalier. For it was this commander who had to deal with the immediate crisis, take care of the wounded and dead, reorganize security, coordinate with the Saudis, keep higher headquarters informed, and provide information to the media. It is easy to forget that his responsibilities extended beyond security at Khobar Towers. While he had a staff and subordinate commanders to assist him, he was, nevertheless, responsible for air operations in Iraq and in the Gulf. He had people living and working on ten sites in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, Oman, Qatar, and UAE. He had been aggressive in upgrading security in all of them over the previous seven months. And, as I have already noted, he was in the process of continuing force protection improvements when the bomb detonated.

#### CLOSING COMMENTS

In the wake of this attack, I have directed a series of initiatives to immediately upgrade our security posture in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere in the region. This effort will eventually incorporate General Downing's recommendations. Meanwhile, we are continuing to conduct necessary intelligence relating to the apprehension of the Khobar Towers terrorists and on future terrorist activities in the region. Our USCENTCOM force protection team is reexamining our procedures and devising additional upgrades—from facility improvements and hardening of sites, to new types of sensors, to requirements for additional security personnel. Concurrently, subordinate commanders are looking at better locations for housing our people.

We are continuing to follow through with our counter-terrorist activities, those designed to prevent a terrorist act before it occurs or to neutralize a group entirely, just as occurred last week when our law enforcement people arrested suspected terrorists in Arizona before they could carry out terrorist bombings. Yet, the success of this effort hinges on making significant improvements in our human intelligence on terrorist organizations in the region. My Bottom line: We will learn and improve from this incident at Khobar Towers.

Even with additional physical security upgrades, however, we must recognize that we will remain vulnerable to terrorist attacks. No amount of money or physical security upgrade alone can stop a determined terrorist. We must recognize that while terrorism has been a threat to our country for many years, it is evolving and growing more sophisticated. We must keep in mind it is both a criminal act and way of war and our service men and women are on the front line of terrorism everywhere in the world.

We mourn for our fallen comrades. It is the heart wrenching part of the profession of arms. Some forget that placing our service men and women in harm's way around the world involves risk. While the American people have every right to demand competence, character, and leadership from our military commanders, they should not expect "zero defects". Demanding such a rigid standard produces timid leaders, afraid to make tough decisions in crisis, unwilling to take the risks necessary for success in military operations. This "zero defect" mindset creates conditions that will lead inevitably . . . in the larger sense . . . to failure in battle and even higher casualties.



Our Nation has vital interests in the Middle East and the Gulf. This recent terrorist attack does not change this reality. We cannot withdraw, for doing so would reward terrorists and endanger our nation. We must remain engaged in the region, take reasonable action to ensure the safety of our service men and women abroad, and focus on accomplishing our missions.

Chairman THURMOND. Each Senator will now have 7 minutes to make an opening statement and propound questions, except Senator Nunn and myself. We have already made an opening statement, so we will confine ourselves to 5 minutes each.

Secretary Perry, after the Long Commission investigated the October 1983 bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, its report recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the development of doctrine planning, organization, force structure, education and training necessary to defend against and counter to terrorism.

Our losses after this latest attack suggests that the Department of Defense has not implemented this recommendation. Can you explain our security lapse in light of the Long Commission recommendation?

Secretary PERRY. Well, Mr. Chairman, I believe that the Department of Defense does have a very strong emphasis on force protection, including, where appropriate, protection against terrorists. Most recently, in the course of policies and in the course of education, we have just authorized the antiterrorism program, which General Shalikashvili described to you. He may want to make an additional comment about the implementation of that program, which is quite recent.

General SHALIKASHVILI. Mr. Chairman, we do have printed, distributed, taught in the schools, practiced on exercises, joint doctrine to deal with terrorism. We do, in fact, practice it as terrorism evolves and becomes more sophisticated and becomes more linked to sophisticated terrorist-sponsored governments.

We have to continually improve in our training and our education, as well as in those protective measures that we have around our facilities. But I believe that our compliance with the recommendation of the Long Commission on this particular score is quite good.

Chairman THURMOND. General Shalikashvili, it appears that the upper levels the Department of Defense and the Joint Staff were either unaware or insufficiently attentive in preparing for this most recent attack despite numerous internal warnings, indications and similar attacks.

What does this tell us about priorities in the organization?

General SHALIKASHVILI. Mr. Chairman, I believe, as both Secretary Perry and General Peay have already testified, we did have intelligence that caused us to raise our security level from low, some 18 months ago, to medium before the OPM-SANG bombing, to high almost immediately after the OPM-SANG bombing, and we have maintained that high terrorist threat warning throughout the period to include up to the day of the bombing at Khobar Towers.

We have also issued, I believe, all the requisite instructions to the field to cause a reexamination of our security posture. The results of that reexamination have been described by General Peay. I tried to touch upon the additional measures that the Secretary felt it was necessary to take in order to have a broader, more long-

range view on what ought to be done to strengthen our antiterrorist posture.

I think we have made a very exhaustive effort to ensure we understand better what policy changes, what direction, what guidance has to be given to the regional commanders so they can better deal with this heightened terrorist threat, not just in the Middle East but in all the regions where we have our forces stationed.

So, I do not believe that the Department, from its perspective, has either ignored the situation or has somehow been lax in its attention to what needed to be done. But much of the work is done by the regional commanders, and it is the Department's responsibility to ensure that they are tasked to do that work, and then that we stand ready to provide them the resources that they might request of us to get the job done. I believe those things were accomplished, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND. General Peay, when was the last time, prior to the attack, that you visited the military complex and what was your assessment, both from personal observation and briefings from subordinates of the adequacy of the security infrastructure and policies at the complex?

General PEAY. Mr. Chairman, I never visited the complex prior to the attack. I visited this particular command, its leadership and its senior leadership a number of times over the past 24 months. I had staff that visited that particular facility. I mentioned to you that I have a number of housing facilities. My focus at that time was on force protection kinds of elements in a series of commander conferences, phone calls with my subordinate commanders and meetings with ambassadors.

I met principally, on the operational level, dealing with flights into Iraq, the Gulf, working rules of engagement, security, combat search and rescue (CSAR), types of operations. I had not physically visited this building or that site prior to the attack.

Chairman THURMOND. My time is up. Senator Nunn.

Senator NUNN. Thank you, Senator Thurmond.

Mr. Secretary, there was a November 1995 bombing in Saudi Arabia. After that, there was an assessment made. Is that assessment classified and could you furnish that to us?

Secretary PERRY. This is the vulnerability assessment of Khobar Towers, in particular?

Senator NUNN. Yes.

Secretary PERRY. The Office of Special Investigations conducted a vulnerability assessment of Khobar Towers. That was published early this year. It is available, yes. I have already directed that that be sent to you.

Senator NUNN. So that is not a classified document?

Secretary PERRY. It is classified, but it will be made available to the committee.

Senator NUNN. General Peay, you mentioned there were a number of housing complexes in your command. I assume, also, in Saudi Arabia do you have any number of how many facilities are in your command that have similar arrangements or are exposed or vulnerable to this kind of attack in your command?

General PEAY. I can try and roll those up for you subjectively, Senator Nunn. I would tell you in open session here that Khobar

Towers was one of our better prepared facilities. We have enormous work to do across the entire region, to include Saudi Arabia, upgrading these postures, and many of these facilities go back 40, 50 years.

Senator NUNN. Well, you are talking about 10, 20, 100, 1000? Give us some general estimate of what the scope of this vulnerability is with our military personnel.

General PEAY. In Saudi Arabia, there are 79; 13 are directly under me as CINC and 66 are under the chief of mission. They vary in different sizes. Some are highrise kinds of configurations, others are spread over a large—

Senator NUNN. What about in your whole command?

General PEAY. There are 45 facilities that I directly deal with and another 394 that house OSD personnel and involve both the Chief of Mission and myself.

Senator NUNN. General Shali, could you tell us in just a ballpark figure how many around the world we have where we have these kinds of vulnerabilities?

General SHALIKASHVILI. The threat, of course, varies, but if the threat were the same in other parts, we are talking hundreds, upon hundreds of such facilities.

Senator NUNN. Now, I assume you are talking about upgrading. You are talking about substantial amounts of money; is that right?

General PEAY. Sir, I think the upgrades would go to moving away from urban areas which would require large monies in relocation, or going through what we did 15 years ago as we first came upon this threat on the ambassadorial side; the large dollars associated with hardening facilities.

Senator NUNN. What about in Bosnia, General Shalikashvili? That is certainly a high-risk area and we had the headlines in The Washington Post yesterday morning about Mujahadeen who are still located there, perhaps in police forces still abusing civilians according to that report, and so forth. What kind of vulnerability do we have in Bosnia?

General SHALIKASHVILI. The situation is different in Bosnia because the forces we have there, for the most part, are units that are stationed in concerns that we have constructed that are away from urban areas where we have a pretty extensive perimeter.

While they are always vulnerable, as we said before, because terrorists find ways to overcome almost any defense, they are vulnerable in a very different sense because in most cases, they can't have standoff distances. In most cases, they are, in fact, armed. Their danger runs into when they are on patrols more.

So, it is a different threat but obviously, whenever you are in an environment, as you are in Bosnia, the last thing you can do is assume that you are not vulnerable to terrorist attacks. You are, and they are.

Senator NUNN. General Peay, did the Saudi officials turn down a request to extend the perimeter at Khobar Towers facility? If so, was this decision appealed up to your level of the chain of command, and did you pass it on if it got to you?

General PEAY. Sir, I don't know the exact answer to that. I think that will be one of the questions that will have to be resolved.



Senator NUNN. Well, you would know whether such a request got to you, would you not?

General PEAY. It never came to Central Command and I don't know if it came to the next intermediate command between me and the commander at the front-end of the spear.

Senator NUNN. So, it never got to your level?

General PEAY. It did not.

Senator NUNN. Then could it have gotten to General Shalikashvili or Secretary Perry?

General PEAY. It would not have if it did not come to me.

Senator NUNN. That would have had to come through you?

General PEAY. It would have had to come through me, and I would like to say that I probably, I know I would have tried to have worked that problem first before I ever raised it to the Chairman's or the Secretary of Defense's level.

Senator NUNN. In other words, if it had come to you, you would have tried to work it directly with your counterparts in Saudi Arabia and Defense officials rather than passing it on to the Secretary of Defense?

General PEAY. Certainly initially, and I think, in the background of my opening comments of understanding the culture, I think that you very well would have seen me work that for a considerable period of time as we work with the host government to try to fix that particular challenge.

Senator NUNN. Mr. Chairman, my time has expired. Thank you.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Warner.

Senator WARNER. Thank you. I am going to pick up on that question by Senator Nunn because it seems to me the responsibility of this committee is to establish accountability. They are not here for head hunts or anything like that, but the buck stops here at this committee because the people of the United States look to the Congress as the ones really ultimately responsible for the welfare of the men and women of the armed forces that take these risks all over the world.

General Peay, I am stunned by the answer that it is almost 2 weeks since this incidence and you still do not know whether or not your subordinates appealed this decision above, as I understand it, the general officer level in the field.

General PEAY. Well, let me tell you what I have gotten telephonically, and I have deliberately tried not to get into that detail while the investigation is ongoing by General Downing.

Senator WARNER. But I assume the President would have been interested in this and would have called in and asked, Well, what happened that day? You knew that we were coming up here with this hearing, so I must say I am stunned by that.

General PEAY. Well, let me try, Senator Warner, to go further with it. Certainly, in my conversations with subordinate commanders through the chain, in a period of grief and mourning that is still going on today, where in the early days you get conflicting information, I have always found, over my 35 years, it is best to be steady and be sure you understand the information that you are hearing.

The information that I have been hearing to date, which I don't want to say is final until it is under some sworn testimony or the

investigation by General Downing's committee is done, is that on several occasions, read at least two, that at the colonel level, the O-6 level, there were conversations with Saudi host government people at the province state security level in the eastern province region. They stated those personnel were working through the issue, that a number of other concessions were made, whether it be increasing fence levels out with more hardened barriers, cutting vegetation on private land, those kinds of—

Senator WARNER. General, my time is going to be lost. I talked to General Shalikashvili by telephone 3 or 4 days ago, right, General? I asked you this explicit question. You said, I will get back to you in a few minutes. You then, I think, contacted General Peay. You said the answer is yet to be developed.

I guess I dropped it at that point on the assumption by the time this hearing came along, there could be some evidence shed on that question I put to you, one, what was the discussion? Was it appealed up the chain? Two, were there any corroborative documents, like written requests by the on-scene Commander to the Saudi Government, and you said you would make that available.

I guess it is still not available to this committee; is that correct?

General SHALIKASHVILI. Senator Warner, it is not available to me. I discussed the matter with General Peay after you and I talked about it. What I told you was correct, the information had not come to me. The information had not come to General Peay. I am not aware of any written record of that request. I have had reported to me, as a result of that inquiry by General Peay, just what he told you right now, that at the colonel level, there had been those discussions on at least two occasions.

Senator WARNER. Yesterday, I had a talk with the Ambassador from Saudi Arabia to the United States, Prince Bandar, and I recommended to the chairman that he appear before this committee in closed session later today.

Chairman THURMOND. Incidentally, I talked to him yesterday, too, and he may be invited to a closed session.

Senator WARNER. I would urge that, Mr. Chairman. But the statements he made to me are in direct conflict with some of the evidence before the committee this morning. At some point, we have got to resolve that as a committee.

So, I will press on to you, Mr. Secretary. I was taken by the forthright analysis you put in your statement regarding the intelligence reports, and let me read two of your sentences: But the intelligence information, while voluminous and pointing to a high-threat level, was also fragmentary and inconclusive.

Further on you say: But it seems clear that local commanders would have put a higher priority on timing if they had perceived a threat as sophisticated and as powerful as actually occurred. Now, that appears to me to indicate you have a judgment that it was an intelligence failure by the U.S. Military as well as the Saudi, presumably cooperative, intelligence system.

I think it is important to the American public that people in your position of responsibility, from time to time, state very clearly, was there or was there not an intelligence failure, in your judgment, in this case?

Secretary PERRY. I would say not an intelligence failure. We had much intelligence on what was going on relative to the terrorist threat, not only in Saudi Arabia, but in the Mideast. It was intelligence on a strategic level, so that we knew we had a high threat level.

We called it a high threat level based on intelligence. That was a very important achievement of intelligence. The intelligence was not useful at a tactical level. It did not specify the nature of the threat or the timing of the threat, and therefore, it was not what we might call actionable intelligence in terms of doing our planning.

Also, the intelligence, I think, inevitably so in this kind of a problem, was contradictory. There is probably not a week goes by that General Shali and I do not get intelligence warnings of a specific threat like this, and maybe one out of ten of them will turn out to be correct.

Senator WARNER. Let me refer you to, and I am sure you have seen this, The New York Times piece of July 7th. It seems to me a very thorough piece on the subject. Now, in this particular sentence I will read, we are referring to the failure by the Saudi Government to allow our FBI to interview the perpetrators of the Riyadh bombing, but this statement is made: We are running with a base of knowledge that is virtually zero, said one senior American intelligence official. We didn't know anything about these people. I think the antecedent is, of course, these four.

So, it seems to me there is a great deal of documentation around here and I believe your statement indicates that we have got to probe very seriously as to our own decision about the intelligence.

Secretary PERRY. I think we need much more effort on HUMINT (human intelligence) and that has to be in cooperation——

Senator WARNER. We have all known that.

Secretary PERRY. That has to be in cooperation with the Saudi Government.

Senator WARNER. I understand that, and that is a subsidiary question, if not a primary one, in this entire investigation by the committee. We have got to determine the level of cooperation with the Saudi Government. But Mr. Secretary, in your opening remarks, you stated, "There is no issue that I feel more deeply about or task that I work harder than the safety and welfare of our military personnel."

Yet we are learning today of a failure to bring forward, up through the chain of command, what now appears to everyone, a very serious breakdown between the discussions between our military and perhaps the U.S. Embassy in Saudi and the Saudi Government about the need to improve security.

Did you implement, as a part of your concern about overseas security, instructions to your subordinates to bring these questions up to you personally?

Secretary PERRY. We always promote exercising the chain of command in both directions, and that certainly includes calling for help when you need help. Our judgment call here was whether they thought they needed help. In retrospect, it seems clear they did, and it is quite clear that General Peay, General Shali and I would have been prepared to help had we gotten this request.



Senator WARNER. My time is up, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just so that the record is clear, from what you just said, then, Secretary Perry, this request to extend the perimeter never came to you personally?

Secretary PERRY. That is correct.

Senator LEVIN. What we have is just a tragic reminder here that the number one threat that Americans face here and abroad is terrorism and this is a major change in terms of threats to our security, but it has been clear that this is a major threat ever since the cold war was over, and clearer yet that the war against terrorists has got to be fought on many fronts.

As has been pointed out this morning, they aim at targets randomly. They do not limit themselves to military targets. This one happened to be, but they aim at civilians just as often as they aim at military or Government targets, and we have seen that here in this country with the World Trade Center.

I think your focus, all of your focuses this morning on what you are doing about terrorism and the importance of changing the direction of the expenditure of our resources to fight the war against terrorism instead of some of the older battles that have been fought, and in many cases won, is very important testimony, and I am very glad to hear it.

I want to also explore this question of the discussions, to the extent that you know them, onsite, about that perimeter because I think that is obviously the key question here. Major General Anderson, on a television program, said the following, and as I understand, he would be the commanding general, Southern Watch; is that correct?

General PEAY. That is correct, sir.

Senator LEVIN. So, he would be the commander of General Schwalier, if I am pronouncing his name correctly, and this is what General Anderson said: At two different times at a working level, requests were made of Saudi security personnel to move the particular barrier out farther away. The response was no.

Then he went on to say: It was not—we do not care; therefore, no. It was, we care, we need to work with you on force protection issues. Now, have any of you discussed this matter with General Anderson?

General PEAY. I have not directly. Well, I'm not sure. I may have over the last two weeks with the hundreds and hundreds of phone calls we have had on this issue. Again, I would caution that we not be so sure we are going to get this exactly correct. I think what we have got here, sir, is at the General Schwalier level, and I have tried to think through what was going on in his mind at this time.

I think you have got a commander there that has got a lot of installations working for him. He is pursuing a threat. He is conducting air operations into Iraq. He's working, bringing the carrier battle group in to integrate the Air Tracking Order (ATO) and he's dealing with local officials.

He's got some very qualified people that are working for him and they are working daily in the province. They are working with the

ambassadorial team, the charge, those people, to try to consult, is the word that is used very much in the region, to effect change.

I think you had that ongoing at the time, that you had a significant change in the threat and the terrorists got into us. So, I don't think it is a case, was the fence in too close? I think most people would clearly say yes, it was. I think it is a common sense reaction that you want to get greater distance from you in terms of protection.

Was that problem being worked very vigorously by young people up and down the chain of command? I think it probably was, in very tough, harsh conditions. Do you think that should always result in passing something up the chain of command? I don't know. In the number of things that he is working on, I find it difficult today to try to second-guess a forward-deployed commander because that's what happens, you know.

We could be working the fence and we would have them go through the gate, like in Beirut. I tell you, we would have had hundreds and hundreds of casualties. So, I'm a little reluctant to get into a priority-of-work effort that a youngster that is forward is enduring.

Should the fence have been out further? Yes. Were they working it? I think they probably were. Should they have kicked it upstairs? I don't know. I just don't know.

Senator LEVIN. What is clear is that they did not kick it upstairs. That is what we have heard from each of the three of you this morning.

Now, on a previous terrorist attack in Riyadh, we had a request of the Saudis to interrogate the terrorists prior to their execution. As I understand it, that request had been denied. Can you tell us about that, as to whether or not that is true? We had, what is it, last November at the OPM-SANG, November 1995, persons were arrested. They were convicted by whatever process they use in Saudi Arabia, and were executed.

But before the execution, as I read the media here, there was a request for us to discuss this with those terrorists. Did we make that request? Was it denied by the Saudis? If so, why was it denied, and how far up the chain did that request go to the Saudis? I could ask maybe Secretary Perry.

Secretary PERRY. I'm only a third-hand source of information on that, Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. Let me interrupt you, then. Do we have a second- or first-hand source of information here?

General PEAY. I think, sir, that was probably handled in the DCI and FBI chains. It did not come to the military.

Senator LEVIN. So, your information is as good as we are going to have this morning. Thank you. Secretary Perry?

Secretary PERRY. I have raised this question to Director Freeh. This was not an action that we were directly involved in. I was specifically raising it to him relative to my visit over to Saudi Arabia, my plan to meet with the leadership, because I wanted to make clear that we absolutely had to have full cooperation on this investigation.

So I wanted to get the background on what had happened there so I could be clear that we did not have that problem this time.

I did meet with King Fahd, as I indicated. In my presence, he directed the Minister of Interior to provide full cooperation to do this as a joint project with the FBI.

Subsequently, Director Freeh has met with the Minister of Interior in Saudi Arabia and was promised that full cooperation. We must have full cooperation this time. We cannot accept the problems we had the last time.

Again, I am not the witness to describe to you how that situation went the last time, but I can tell you how important it is that we have full cooperation this time.

Senator LEVIN. My time is up. Thank you.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, we all recognize the deaths of 19 Americans is a tragic example of the risks that are willingly assumed every day by the men and women in our armed forces and I believe that all Americans should understand that the U.S. military personnel serving in Saudi Arabia are there to protect our vital national interests.

At the same time, prior to the tragedy of June 25th, measures to protect our forces from terrorist attacks were clearly inadequate and the testimony I have heard so far indicates that the President of the United States waged war against terrorism by means of a summit meeting in a resort town in Egypt where there were 240 minutes of opening statements, 40 minutes of discussion and a photo opportunity.

The summit produced a lot of symbolism but little in the way of concrete recommendations to combat terrorism. Syria, identified by the State Department as one of the world's leading sponsors of terrorism, did not attend the meeting. The participants could not even agree to specifically condemn Iran for aiding and abetting terrorist groups.

The only result of the summit was a lofty joint statement by President Clinton and Egyptian President Mubarek condemning terrorism and promising future cooperation, future cooperation and consultation on ways to halt these attacks. I quote from the President's statement. "We must actively counter the terrorists with all the means at our command, combining our efforts tangibly and joining our strength to defeat their evil aims."

Now, little more than 3 months after the summit in Egypt, and after another couple of international get-togethers to talk tough on terrorism, 19 more Americans have been killed by a terrorist bomb.

What happened to the goals proclaimed at the Egypt summit? After the Riyadh bombing in November it was clear that security at U.S. installations in Saudi Arabia had to be increased, and apparently General Peay did not visit the facilities, did not keep close track of security enhancements, and still does not seem to have a good grasp of the situation under his command. I would suggest that, General Peay, for example, you call up the General and ask him what he was thinking rather than come here and conjecturing as to what his thoughts were.

In all due respect, Secretary Perry did not answer Senator Levin's question, nor were we not allowed to interrogate those men that were beheaded, those terrorists that were arrested and be-



headed in Riyadh. Do you know the answer to that, Secretary Perry?

Secretary PERRY. I know that Director Freeh told me we were not.

Senator MCCAIN. So, how does that jibe with the cooperation that was pledged at the multimillion dollar cost to the taxpayers summit in Egypt?

Secretary PERRY. Senator McCain, as I testified to Senator Levin, it does not jibe with it, and it is not acceptable. We must have full cooperation this time.

Senator MCCAIN. You keep talking about full cooperation, Secretary Perry. Were we ever fully informed of the results of the Riyadh investigation? Did we press for it? I mean, obviously, the Saudis interrogated these people. Did we ever press for or receive any information about what information the Saudis received if we were denied access to them?

Secretary PERRY. I believe the FBI did press for that, yes.

Senator MCCAIN. But Mr. Secretary, you are the one that is responsible for the security of these men and women. Would you not want to have that information?

Secretary PERRY. I do want it, and I am going to insist on getting it on this investigation.

Senator MCCAIN. Did you ask for it at the time?

Secretary PERRY. I did not ask for it at the time.

Senator MCCAIN. Yet you stated in your statement here, you said, "At that point we made what we believed to be a prudent judgment that this attack might not be an isolated event but a new trend in a high terrorist threat level to Saudi Arabia."

You made that judgment, that it would be a high terrorist threat level to Saudi Arabia and yet you did not ask for the information that was obtained from the previous terrorists that were arrested, tried and executed?

Secretary PERRY. We are asking for it, and as I testified, we expect full cooperation from the Saudis in this investigation.

Senator MCCAIN. But you did not ask for it, according to your testimony, at the time?

Secretary PERRY. That is correct.

Senator MCCAIN. I think that answer speaks for itself. Should it be of interest to the American people that the funding for antiterrorism, according to a Defense Department report, I quote, Deep cuts in the Defense Department's own antiterrorism funding, an 82 percent drop at the Air Force since 1994, and a 57 percent dip at the Army since 1989.

Is that the way we try to combat terrorism and make it a high priority, by cutting that much funding on our antiterrorism efforts?

Secretary PERRY. I think that was a bad cut. I have directed the services to increase the funding in antiterrorism.

Senator MCCAIN. When did you direct the services to increase the funding, Secretary Perry?

Secretary PERRY. Let General Shali describe to you the specific antiterrorism study we made and that was one of the findings to come out of that study.

General SHALIKASHVILI. The Antiterrorism Study identified two issues pertaining to funding of antiterrorism things. One, that the

services increase their funding; and two, a recommendation to the Secretary of Defense that we create a program line under the Secretary of Defense with which he can fund high priority antiterrorism programs that need to be funded. Those recommendations went to him within the last month, month and a half, and he approved it within the last month.

Senator MCCAIN. One of the recommendations was to put mylar on the windows of the barracks. Reports are that it cost \$4.5 million and that money was not available, and so the decision to put mylar on the windows to prevent glass shattering was put off until October 1st. Is that true, General Peay, do you know?

General PEAY. I think mylar was one of a number of initiatives that the commander was working on the ground. He put that in his plan, I guess you would call that, for funding, put his other monies at other kinds of upgrades.

Senator MCCAIN. So, the answer is yes, it was delayed until the first of October?

General PEAY. We have already ordered, I think, \$100,000 in the past month. That mylar will be placed on the windows as the windows are reconstituted and put back in the barracks now over the next several years.

Senator MCCAIN. Over the next several years.

General PEAY. We may not be in that facility in the next several years, so one of the thoughts here was to try to get a quick movement out of that facility to another area that is better in terms of defense. So the young people in the chain were looking at not putting money against that facility if you are going to move.

Like I said, we had placed \$100,000 on the external windows and those are being worked.

Senator MCCAIN. In the meantime, General, the young people that you referred to were not adequately protected.

My time is up, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, as I listen to the testimony here today, it seems to me that in response to the attack in Riyadh last November that a number of steps were taken which were aimed at increasing the level of security and, in fact, as one of the witnesses testified this morning, those steps undoubtedly had some effect on diminishing the number of casualties from the terrorist attack at Dhahran.

But the obvious fact is that they did not do enough because 19 Americans are dead, and I think it is in that spirit that we are going forward with this inquiry. Some of these questions are going to be tough but we all have an interest. We all have a shared interest, and I am sure the witnesses agree with this, to make sure that we do everything humanly possible, understanding that hindsight is clearer than foresight, and understanding that terrorists, as has been said, will always search for the vulnerable target and then hit it.

But we cannot ever come to another hearing, months or years from now, and look back and say we did not do enough, particularly when we are dealing with a large, but nonetheless finite number of military installations. It is one thing to say that we cannot protect every civilian target of a terrorist, but I think we have got

to create a record where we learn from this tragedy and never face a situation like this again.

I might say, parenthetically, and I appreciate the spirit of the questions here today, that in addition to the tragic loss of life it seems to me the last thing we want to give the terrorists here is a sense that their act has either dissuaded the United States from its pursuit of the vital national interests we have in the Gulf region, that the terrorist bomb will separate us from our allies in Saudi Arabia even though we may want to join with them in some mutual self-analysis and self-criticism, or that we become divided in this country, one against the other.

But I must say, some of the things that I have heard today, as much as I know how much of an effort was made after Riyadh to avoid a similar situation, do trouble me. For instance, I do not know how we can say that there was not an intelligence failure here, Mr. Secretary.

General Peay used the word that the intelligence forces performed competently. Perhaps competently but certainly not adequately or else this would not have happened.

I want to go to something else, and that is, General Peay, your comment about whether that officer on the ground who had the conversation with his Saudi counterpart about extending the perimeter to the 400 feet should have kicked it upstairs. It seems to me, and judging by your statement, you are not really sure. I think we have got to create a record here that sends an unmistakable message, in spite of all that is going on in a theater like this, that security, force protection, is extremely important. Once we have designated the security level, the threat level, as high, any question as fundamental as this one of extending the perimeter has to be kicked up almost immediately.

It is as if there was a bomb ticking here, and we could have done something, and we had one bright officer on the ground who understood that we could have done something to limit, perhaps eliminate, any casualties here and it was not done.

I want to ask you if you would reconsider your statement about whether, in fact, that officer should have kicked this upstairs, this decision.

General PEAY. Sir, that is a great question. You are into the guts of what we call the art of command. I think we have to have latitude and judgment at every level, platoon leader, company commander, battalion commander, all the way up the chain of command. I do not think we can necessarily legislate what should be kicked up.

Now, having said that, you have to have an openness and a style of command that does encourage those kinds of things to come up. I think we have that style of command among the subordinate commanders in Central Command, and I would like to point out to the committee the kinds of people that we are talking about here now. The Army Component Commander, Steve Arnold, who was the G-3 during the Gulf War for our country basically for General Yoesock and General Schwarzkopf, also went to Somalia with the 10th Mountain Division and is now back.

Lt. Gen. John Jumper, just picked to be the Deputy Chief of Staff of Operations for the Air Force, out of his job as the Air Force Com-



ponent Commander, and you certainly understand the importance of that job to the Air Force.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Excuse me, General Peay, excuse me. I regret doing this but I know my time is limited.

General PEAY. I am trying, sir, to point out to you that it is a very competent chain of command that encourages openness. I think if I legislated the pickup of this argument at the province level, I think I could come up with another 50 others. I think we have to teach our youngsters to make those value judgments.

I understand the thrust of your question, but I am not so sure I am on your side on this one, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I regret that and I say respectfully I think that is exactly the wrong message to send. Again, I understand that hindsight is clearer than foresight but we have got a—let me put it to you this way.

Secretary Perry, General Shali, General Peay, you have come before us over and over again and said to us that you want us to authorize a level of support for our troops that makes sure, first, we can deter conflict; second, if we face conflict that we will not only win it but we will win it with minimal, hopefully zero, casualties to American forces. You, Mr. Secretary, have been very insistent on that.

I think part of what we are saying here, as you look at it, is that we protected ourselves so well and we performed so well in battle that there is a danger here that enemies of ours will strike at our vulnerability. One of the vulnerabilities here is to terrorism.

I think now we have got to bring that same heightened, urgent, comprehensive desire to protect our forces, not only to the battlefield but, sadly, when they are just in installations, or in apartments as they were at Khobar, and that the message should be that this is such a priority that no colonel on the ground, faced with the slowness of the Saudi response, will just take that. They will go right to the top and say lives are on the line here.

This has the same consequences as if we sent some people into battle without adequate support, without adequate weaponry. Mr. Secretary, do you want to respond to that?

Secretary PERRY. Dealing with terrorism is a difficult and fundamentally different problem than trying to deal with military conflict, and it does challenge the traditional approaches.

I do believe we still have to use our chains of command to deal with it, and I do believe we still have to allow for judgment down the chain of command. I, of course, wish this issue had been brought up to me, and I know what my answer would have been had it been brought up to me.

But General Peay's point, I think, is quite right. If you set up a system that forces that to be brought up, how many other hundreds of thousands of issues are going to be brought up and how that might clog the chain of command. I think that was the basic point he was making, and I understand that point.

Senator LIEBERMAN. My time is up. Respectfully, I do not understand it, and I understand the difficulty of the thousands of items that may be raised, but this, as we see here, is life and death. I do not even want to criticize that particular officer. I am saying let us learn from it and create a climate where the next time some-

body has so fundamental a security concern that they do not think twice when they do not get an adequate response from the host country of bringing it right to the top.

My time is up. I thank the Chair.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Smith.

Senator SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, General Shali and General Peay, these kinds of tragedies are always very difficult for all of us and unfortunately even though we do sometimes the best we can, tragedies do occur. That is the risk that all our military personnel take. One of the airmen who lost his life was Peter Mongera of Stratham, New Hampshire, and I am trying to be fair about it and give the benefit of the doubt, but this is very difficult.

I want to focus back, General Peay, for a moment on this issue that has been raised several times by the Members on the discussions, you used the term discussions, quote, unquote, with an officer regarding the extension of the perimeter.

Was there a formal request originated anywhere to extend the perimeter of that compound?

General PEAY. My understanding is in verbal conversation—

Senator SMITH. Verbal conversation—I am asking about a formal—was there a formal request?

General PEAY. There was not a formal request but I also have heard that there was a Memorandum For Record (MPR) that the officer involved made of that particular request. But I would again, sir, tell you that these conversations were in a period of grief and mourning. There's a lot of misinformation out there, in my judgment, as I have looked over these last 2 weeks, so I caveat it, sir.

Senator SMITH. I realize you are still in investigation, but let me ask the question again and if you can, give me a yes or no answer. To your knowledge, was there ever a formal request by anybody in the command at any level to extend the perimeter of that fence, to extend the perimeter of that compound?

General PEAY. There was not a formal written request, not to my knowledge.

Senator SMITH. Now, in the discussion that took place with an officer and the Saudi official, do any of the three of you know whether there was any representative, outside of the military of the U.S. Government, present at that conversation? Any member of the Defense Department, State Department, any nonmilitary official present at that conversation?

General PEAY. Sir, I don't know.

Senator SMITH. Do you know, General Shali?

General SHALIKASHVILI. I do not know.

Senator SMITH. What was the circumstance of that conversation? Where was it?

General PEAY. Sir, I don't know. I think the context was that these people were working together over a number of days, maybe even months, on a series of force protection upgrades. This was one of those that were discussed. It is my feeling that a number of these particular areas were agreed to and they were working through this particular challenge. Again, it goes back to my point about defense is never finished. They were working through the problem.

Senator SMITH. If the press reports are accurate, the Saudis, quote, unquote, said no to the extension of the perimeter; is that correct?

General PEAY. Sir, I can't go on the press reports.

Senator SMITH. I am asking you is that correct?

General PEAY. I don't know.

Senator SMITH. Mr. Secretary, is it correct that the Saudis formerly denied the extension of the perimeter?

Secretary PERRY. Senator Smith, I want to get an answer to that question. The report that I have at this stage, which may turn out to change as we get more formal testimony on it, but the report I have to date is that it was requested of the Saudis, some Saudi official, and the answer was not "no", but the answer was "not now, not yet". That was my understanding of how the discussion went.

Senator SMITH. Well, who made the request of the Saudi officials?

Secretary PERRY. Again my understanding of it, it was a colonel, an O-6 in the command.

Senator SMITH. On his own, without direction from superiors?

Secretary PERRY. Yes.

Senator SMITH. The issue, following up just briefly on Senator McCain's comment about the 82 percent drop in the Air Force in the study regarding antiterrorism funding, that report does indicate that a lot of that funding reduction came as a result of the closure of bases, to be fair, not just to cut on active bases. But it does say that some of the cuts are due to—it says that the cuts are due to base closings where security is no longer needed, but the report still argues that future funding levels will be inadequate to cover the security of sensitive areas.

Were any reprogramming requests made of the Congress to reprogram dollars back into the facilities around the world, specifically the Saudi Arabia facilities, or any other facilities in Bosnia or any place around the world?

General SHALIKASHVILI. I am not aware of any. Also, we have been, for quite some time, putting quite a bit of money into security upgrades into our facilities' housing areas and so on. Much of that work has already been done.

So, when we started out with a zero base, there was a need for a different amount, a much larger amount, than there is on a day-to-day basis today. Part of the reduction is because some bases have been closed, part of it is because much of the work has already been done, but there is clearly more work to be done, and the Antiterrorist Task Force has found that we had reduced that funding too much, so services have to reprogram more money into it and we have to create an OSD-controlled fund site for it, as well.

Senator SMITH. But the fact is that funding for the security of military installations comes under the operations and maintenance accounts, for the most part, and those accounts, since 1993, have been cut. They have been cut 8.6 percent since 1993. The President's request this year has a 7 percent cut in the operation and maintenance account.

We have had testimony, I believe that was General Krulak who testified that he, at times, did not have appropriate materials, tents, perhaps leaky tents, in Bosnia, sleeping bags that were inad-



equate, and so forth, clothing. These are all falling under this quality of life area, and I think, you know, you cannot come up here and say that you are doing everything possible to ensure adequate security with those kinds of reductions unless the O&M accounts are being cut and you are taking the cuts elsewhere other than in security. But that is not what this report says.

Let me just ask one more question. I guess, Secretary Perry, it would be for you. Why are we continuing to use American pilots to enforce the no-fly zone? Cannot the Saudi pilots begin to take up more and more of this?

Secretary PERRY. We have American pilots, British pilots, and French pilots all involved in the no-fly zone. I believe that we need, for the deterrence of Iraq, the presence of U.S. Forces in the area, and in particular, the presence of the U.S. Air Forces in the area. The access to the Saudi bases we have not only provides that no-fly zone, it provides deterrence, and it provides the base on which we would build if we got in a war. I think it is a very good decision.

Senator SMITH. What percentage of those flights do American pilots fly, do you know?

Secretary PERRY. Let me ask General Peay on that.

General PEAY. Let me give you an approximate answer and in the closed session I will give you an exact answer. It is not uncommon to put up 100 flights a day and night into Iraq. 65 to 70 percent of those are combat. The others are support flights, such as reconnaissance.

Senator SMITH. What percentage are American pilots or do you want to do that in executive session?

General PEAY. Almost all are American. There are a few, as the Secretary said, British and French.

Senator SMITH. Thank you.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Bryan.

Senator BRYAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just submit my statement for the record.

[The prepared statement of Senator Bryan follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR RICHARD H. BRYAN

I would like to welcome Secretary Perry, General Shalikashvili, and General Peay, although I regret the circumstances under which we are to receive your testimony. What happened to 19 of our American soldiers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia two weeks ago was a terrible tragedy, and I am sure we all share a determination to make sure we do everything humanly possible to see that it does not happen again.

At times like this, we should pause to re-examine our national security interests and priorities. Perhaps we need to take a step back and see if there might be another way to accomplish what we need to get done in other parts of the world. It is time for us to determine exactly what is in our national interest, and to decide what we are willing to put at risk to protect those interests.

It is clear that Saudi Arabia is a country of vital interest to the United States, largely because of its unique place in the world economy and its huge oil reserves. It is also clear that some things need to change in our relationship with the Saudis. I am angry that United States' intelligence officials were not permitted by the Saudi government to talk with the four men accused and subsequently executed for the terrorist bombing in Riyadh last November that killed 5 Americans and 2 Indians. I am further dismayed by the knowledge that our military personnel had perceived a serious security threat at the U.S. base in Dhahran, twice requested permission from the Saudi Government to relocate the security fence, and were twice denied permission to do so by the Saudi government. If we are going to continue a U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia, we will need to renegotiate the terms under which we will stay there.

More importantly, however, the American people have some questions about this bombing that deserve to be answered. Who were the assassins? Do we have solid leads, are we close to finding out? How are we revamping security measures at U.S. military installations in response to this bombing? How do we know if the adjustments we are making will be adequate?

Secretary Perry, you have been quoted in the press as saying the Saudis are currently cooperating with U.S. investigators. Is the Saudi government being more cooperative this time than they were in past investigations? What is that cooperation? Has their attitude changed such that if they were asked today about building a security fence, they would help us build it? I would suggest that we will need to keep a close eye on those activities to make sure that their willingness to cooperate continues. If cooperation does not continue, then Congress will want to be notified. I am certain that my colleagues and I will not tolerate a disruptive attitude with regard to the investigation of the deaths of 19 American soldiers on their soil.

I realize that there are times when we must station U.S. soldiers in volatile and potentially dangerous parts of the world. This should be done only after it has been determined that it is impossible to accomplish our mission from a safer locale. Are we prevented from performing the Iraqi surveillance mission now in Dhahran from any other location? Have we done everything we can to find other facilities in the region that would be safer? Clearly there needs to be greater security measures that can be taken when our soldiers feel they are in unsafe surroundings. What measures are we taking?

I would also like to ask the panel what is being done to examine other installations around the world to see how vulnerable they may be to this type of terrorist attack. I think we are overdue for this kind of security assessment. I hope you will be able to confirm that for me today, and I look forward to your testimony. There are a lot of questions which need to be answered.

Senator BRYAN. One of the other security failures that has been alleged, and this question is to you, General Peay, is that there are other facilities, in fact the word was used, ample facilities, to billet the officers and enlisted personnel who were in the structure that was so badly damaged. We all realize painfully, so vulnerably because of its proximity to the perimeter that there were other facilities that could have been used that would have provided a greater measure of protection for those personnel and that the military was reluctant to make that relocation because it would be considered disruptive.

Can I get your comment and response as to the accuracy of the criticism, and if it is accurate, why were changes not made?

General PEAY. I have not heard that. I know, in the midst of this incident that we did move a number of the outside occupants to other, internal buildings but I have not heard the criticism that you have mentioned.

Senator BRYAN. Aside from the criticism, you have indicated that it was at your request that the threat level was elevated to high. That was your testimony earlier. It is my understanding that there is only one level higher than high and that is critical. So, to put this in some context, from your perspective you saw this as a very, very dangerous area because of what had occurred in November and the intelligence, the data that was coming to you and other commanders.

My question, aside from the criticism, is if there were other places that these personnel could have been billeted at Khobar on the interior, why was that not done?

General PEAY. Again, I don't know if there were empty rooms. Certainly we could have doubled up people in internal rooms. That is a commander's judgment on the ground.

Senator BRYAN. So, at this point you are not able to share with the committee as to whether there were other facilities at Khobar

where these personnel could have been placed so they would not have been as close to the perimeter?

General PEAY. I don't think there was any other available housing. Now, could we have put people in dining facilities and other recreational areas that were more internally located, I suspect that that could have been an action.

I think this all goes back to the bigger question of how you look at the threat, and I do not think that the magnitude of the threat was perceived, even though high, at that would cause the destruction that occurred I do not think was in the mindset of all of us up and down the chain of command.

Senator BRYAN. General, let me just say in all due respect I find that somewhat shocking. I do not have the kind of background that you have in security matters, but we have seen all over the world, whether it is the World Trade Center or what occurred in parts of the world where we have seen terrorist activities, it seems to me that it is not a greatly sophisticated exercise of judgment that the larger the vehicle the more of these explosives that can be placed in those vehicles and that the larger the volume of explosives the greater damage that can be done.

So, I must say it seems to me it is a fairly elementary thing. If you have a sizable vehicle, which is actually what occurred, that indeed this particular structure is highly vulnerable and I do not think it is any great surprise to any of us who are laymen that if you get that kind of explosive combination there that you can do the kind of damage that we saw tragically at Khobar.

Is that something that is new to military commanders? Is that a fair assessment?

General PEAY. That is a great question and I think that is really the issue of what has changed. What has changed to our country and all of the countries in the Gulf is that we now have a changed threat. The introduction of large explosives, of the kind that you are now talking about, this was something that was not expected by all of the governments in the Gulf. This is an introduction of a new threat in the Gulf that we are going to have to look forward to.

Senator BRYAN. I understand that, but I must say that it does not seem to me it was a great leap of logic to understand after the episode in November where these explosives can be concentrated that it is not a question of a technology leap or breakthrough, it is just a question if you can assemble a certain volume of explosives, then you can create tremendous damage.

But let me pursue another line of questioning. Mr. Secretary, is it possible to accomplish this mission, and I am one who supported Operation Desert Shield, Desert Storm, I believe that decision was correct and believe that we have a vital national security interest in the region.

The question I have is with all of the risks that we are now painfully aware of, is it possible to accomplish our mission by other than having American military personnel based in Saudi Arabia?

Secretary PERRY. I believe it would seriously compromise our mission if we had to remove our physical presence and military presence from Saudi Arabia.



Senator BRYAN. Since the Khobar tragedy, have we made any other requests in the nature of additional security protection to the Saudi Government that has been denied?

Secretary PERRY. No, we have not, Senator Bryan, and I have put them on notice that we may have very major requests coming up. I have asked General Peay to recommend to me what would be involved in moving our military forces out of Riyadh. I believe we can provide much better protection at the Khobar Towers, but Riyadh is an urban environment, and I do not know how we are going to provide protection against bombs this size in Riyadh, and therefore, I think the only solution to that problem is we have to move out of Riyadh.

I have alerted the King, Crown Prince and Minister of Defense that such a request may be imminent in a matter of weeks.

Senator BRYAN. General Peay, if I might ask you, because of the difficulties we have seen in what is reported up through the command structure, are you aware of any security requests that have been made at the O-6 level, lower or higher, to provide additional security protections in which the Saudis have either declined, or said look, we are not yet prepared to do that or we have got to give some thought to it.

General PEAY. No, sir, I am not.

Senator BRYAN. With respect to the chain of command, let me be clear on this. The news reports, and indeed, they may not be accurate, indicate that General Schwalier was aware of these requests that had been made to the Saudi officials to extend the perimeter protection. Is that your understanding, General? We constantly hear about these O-6's and we all understand those are bird colonels. But General Schwalier is an O-7, a brigadier. Did he have first-hand knowledge? Did he make the request? What, if anything, can you tell us about that?

General PEAY. I am rather satisfied that in General Schwalier's numerous meetings he would have weekly on force protection within his command, where you have senior people—they are not just an O-6. These are senior colonels of great responsibility in our Army and Air Force.

I think that those discussions perhaps went on with regularity in the force protection meetings, but I think many things were being done at a time when the threat was not quite as clear.

Senator BRYAN. We understand that, but the answer, then, is to your knowledge, General Schwalier would have had knowledge of this request?

General PEAY. I think he probably would have, yes, sir.

Senator BRYAN. I think Senator Levin has told us that at least Major General Anderson, who would be the next higher person in the chain of command, had knowledge of the request?

General PEAY. General Anderson has been on the job about 5 weeks. He is a new commander on the ground and an outstanding officer. I don't know the specifics of all the discussions the year or so that the previous commander had.

Senator BRYAN. So, I guess the last question I would have, other than the O-6's that may have made the request, and General Schwalier, who you indicated because of his briefings would probably have been aware, do we know how much further up the chain

of command this information, namely, the request to extend the security perimeter, was made?

General PEAY. No, we don't. Again, my judgment is, that it was kept there. I think they felt that they were working through a series of force protection upgrades and that they were working hard at the problem at hand and perhaps did not need higher help at this time in the context of my comments about the Saudi culture.

Senator BRYAN. I think we all recognize that was a tragic mistake now. My time is up.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Frahm.

I want to take this opportunity to welcome you to your first public hearing, I believe, on this committee. You come to us highly recommended as a very able person and valuable member of this committee, and I will now be glad to ask you to propound questions.

Senator FRAHM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly appreciate your calling this hearing to focus on the recent attack against the U.S. military housing complex. This incident is especially important to me and the citizens of my State with Senior Airman Jeremy Taylor of Douglas, Kansas, being one of the victims.

Any military operation involves a great deal of risk and danger, certainly. Those that serve in the military know and accept that fact. However, we owe it to the men and women who proudly wear our nation's uniform to make every possible step to ensure the safety of our troops deployed overseas.

A number of questions have been asked, Mr. Chairman, that were of concern to me, certainly about the visit to the base, to the housing unit, the briefings that were received, the information that was ascertained and apparently will be available from the November 13th bombing when five Americans were killed, and extensive questions about the perimeter.

Two additional questions I would like to ask, and Mr. Secretary, is there any evidence of Syrian or other foreign involvement in the most recent bombings?

Secretary PERRY. Senator Frahm, the investigation is still ongoing. I believe they have not reached a conclusion on that yet. It is possible in the closed hearing to discuss what the evidence, one way or the other, on that subject is.

Senator FRAHM. Okay. We will raise it again later. Second, in the big picture for the future, do you anticipate that General Downing's review is going to examine intelligence capacities in assessing threats to our Armed Forces? Can we expect some review of intelligence-gathering and sharing to be better able to take increased action to protect our deployed forces?

Secretary PERRY. Part of General Downing's review will be to look at the threat assessment mechanism, that is correct.

Senator FRAHM. So, we could anticipate some additional information?

Secretary PERRY. Yes, we can. We expect to give this committee a full report on all of General Downing's findings.

Senator FRAHM. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Exon.

Senator EXON. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Welcome to you gentlemen. Let me start out by saying that these are very dif-

ficult hearings and from what I know of this, I have every confidence in you, Mr. Secretary.

I think it is outrageous some of the suggestions that have been made with regard to your position. General Shalikashvili, I think, as you know, there has been no one connected with the military whom I have more respect for than yourself. General Peay, I know this is a very trying time for you also, so this is not an inquisition that we are conducting here.

I hope you all know and understand, but there are some legitimate questions that we have, not so much finger-pointing, but to look to the future to see what we can do to avert this. It has been said that it is so obvious that our forces are in harm's way today more from the result of terrorist action than they are potential enemy action.

But that is a very, very real threat, and we keep dealing with it over and over and over again, and that is why there are some concerns that we have here and we have an obligation to try and get to the bottom of it with your help. So, please accept the questions that I will ask in that frame of mind.

Let me say that we all have a very heavy heart concerning what has happened there. It was brought home to me very vividly last Friday when I attended the military funeral of Air Force Staff Sgt. Ronald King in Omaha, Nebraska. He was the only airman that was involved from our Offutt Base who was killed and there was a wife, an 11-year-old girl, and a 9-year-old son grieving.

This has not been my first military funeral, nor my last, including many that were of a very hurried nature in the South Pacific in World War II. But these things keep coming back to haunt us. I guess we should recognize and realize that this is a chance to not only remember, but salute the excellent men and women of our Armed Forces who are in harm's way, even though we are not today involved in open hostilities.

Let me make it clear there have been many statements today with regard to whose fault this is and what are we going to do about it. There is a lot of second-guessing going on in the United States Senate today. But I would simply point out that the United States Senate had better do some second-guessing on its own.

You know, a couple weeks ago on the floor of the United States Senate, the majority of the United States Senators, in what I thought was one of the dumbest votes that I have seen here in 18 years, voted to open up Pennsylvania Avenue. I suspect that that vote would not prevail today, as it unfortunately did a couple of weeks ago.

Senators make mistakes. I think even some of those holding hearings today, chairing hearings on this who supported opening Pennsylvania Avenue would have different thoughts today when they begin to understand the realities of the dangerous situation that we have. I simply also say, though, you, Mr. Secretary, and others, I think it is well for you to emphasize we have a mission to carry out there. We certainly do.

You said something to the effect that we should not allow ourselves to be driven out by terrorists. I think all of us agree with that, Mr. Secretary. There have been several statements with re-



gard to your meeting with the King and his pledge of wholehearted cooperation.

The problem, I suspect, is not basically with regard to what the King wants, or what you as the Secretary of Defense wants, or what even the President of the United States wants. It is the command up and down the line, what priorities they are giving, what priorities are set.

It is easy to second-guess, but I do want to ask some questions and I will also say that the statement over and over again that there is no absolute security for our Armed Forces is a given and we do not have to say that over and over again.

I want to concentrate, if I might, on some of the reports I have read and I would like to confirm, if I might, the role that General Schwalier and Colonel Boyle have in this proposition. Is General Schwalier the officer immediately in charge of the command that was affected, and what was the role of Colonel Boyle?

As I understand it, he was an expert, supposedly, over there to advise the local command as to the realities and dangers of the situation. Do I accurately describe those two gentlemen and their responsibilities?

Secretary PERRY. General Schwalier was the Wing Commander. Let me ask General Peay to give a more precise answer.

General PEAY. I think the way you have described it is a good characterization of the two officers, sir.

Senator EXON. Thank you. Now, let us follow up on that just a little bit more. In answer to a question by Senator Bryan, General Peay, you indicated that there may have been places that we could have placed our troops that would have not made them as easily killed by moving them into dining facilities.

Is it not true that there were lots of barracks' rooms that were not nearly as exposed or nearly as dangerous for our airmen that were killed, dismembered and wounded by being at a source that was very easy to get to from the standpoint of planting of a vehicle with heavily loaded weapons.

I know hindsight is always better than foresight, but I have been led to believe, and correct me if I have been misled, that there were ample quarters on the inside or the other side of the road where the troops would have been much safer and if we were worried about security there, why did we not move them?

General PEAY. I don't know the answer to the availability of lots of rooms. I think we will have to let the investigation determine that. Again, respectfully, I admire your words, Senator. I am a little hesitant today to second-guess the forward commander in terms of the priorities that he was dealing with at that particular time.

Senator EXON. Have you, Mr. Secretary, or have you, General Shalikashvili, or have you, General Peay, had any direct relationships or conversations about any of this with either General Schwalier or Colonel Boyle? I am sure you have read reports. Have you, Mr. Secretary, had any direct relationship or conversation with either one of these individuals?

Secretary PERRY. Senator Exon, 4 days after the bombing, I went to Dhahran. At that time, I was briefed by General Schwalier, who described to me what had happened, what they had done to pre-

pare for it, how they had responded to the attack. So, I have discussed with him, subsequent to the bombing, some of these issues.

General SHALIKASHVILI. I never met Colonel Boyle, to the best of my knowledge. I did meet with General Schwalier about a month before the incident occurred when I visited Dhahran Air Base. While there he accompanied and hosted me, and while we were going from one facility to the other, we did talk about force protection.

On those occasions, he briefed me on what they were doing as far as force protection on the bases was concerned, and as far as force protection in the living facilities was concerned. The issue of moving the barrier or the issue of moving people never came up. So, I did not have a discussion with him about those two things specifically. He just briefed me in general terms on what they were doing on force protection.

General PEAY. Sort of the same answer, sir. I have had lots of discussions with him, as well as his seniors, on force protection. Their head was in the game on force protection. In regards to this particular fence issue, that discussion never came up.

Senator EXON. One last question if you do not mind, Mr. Chairman. During these conversations with General Schwalier, did you discuss in any detail at all with him or his subordinate, Colonel Boyle, the reasons that they did not or were not able to move faster with regard to the concerns that must have been known to them concerning the potential threat?

Secretary PERRY. We discussed that in general. I have to say, though, that at the time I talked with him, Senator Exon, it was just a few days after the bombing, and he was focused mostly then on trying to do the healing necessary in his wing to get the operation back up to full speed again, which he had just done the day before, and on planning for the moves that he had to make for his forces in the wake of the tragedy.

He did end up moving all of the personnel to less exposed rooms. It was done by doubling and tripling up in rooms, but it was accomplished, and he had also succeeded by then in getting the perimeter of the fence extended. So, he was focused almost entirely, and my discussions with him were focused almost entirely, on where do we go from here.

General SHALIKASHVILI. That subject in that way never came up.

General PEAY. Same here, sir.

Senator EXON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Hutchison.

Senator HUTCHISON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, too, join my colleagues who had a constituent that was killed in Saudi Arabia, and I would like to honor Sergeant Millard D. Campbell, from Angleton, Texas, who was about 7 days from coming home from Saudi Arabia, but did not make it.

I know that it is hard to have Monday morning quarterbacks sitting here and talking to you about failures of judgment or failures in leadership, but I believe the only way we are going to determine what the problems were is to ask the questions and to determine what we can learn from mistakes that might have been made. So, I think the questions certainly should be taken in that spirit.

I would like to ask, in addition to what I think has been covered by others, and potential problems that we can learn from, the size of the bomb issue. It has been reported that our intelligence sources said that they did not think that terrorist groups in that part of the world were able to make bombs larger than approximately 200 pounds. Is that correct?

Secretary PERRY. That is not correct, Senator Hutchison. I read that account in the media. It is simply not correct. That was always understood to be one possibility of what could happen.

Senator HUTCHISON. Secretary Perry, could you just say in your knowledge, then, what was the approximate size of what we thought we were protecting against?

Secretary PERRY. Senator Hutchison, they were looking at a whole spectrum of threat possibilities of which, not just bombs, going after our transportation, going after our school buses, going after our work areas as well as our housing areas, going after our water supply, going after the food supply, the spectrum of ways a terrorist could attack is very wide indeed.

Senator HUTCHISON. But would not the size of the possibilities determine how far a perimeter should be?

Secretary PERRY. I think the confusion on the size is that in the analysis that had been done, it presented a table of the effects of a bomb of 200-pound size, and therefore, that probably caused people to focus on the 200-pound bomb.

But nobody believed, I mean nobody believed, that only a 200-pound bomb could be used. Everybody understood the possibility that a larger bomb could be used.

Senator HUTCHISON. Do you feel that the intelligence that the armed services had for what was possible was sufficient to see what might have been forthcoming here, a 5,000 pound?

Secretary PERRY. The intelligence was all-inclusive. It included all these possibilities and did not direct us or focus us to any one of them.

Senator HUTCHISON. Do you think that our leadership, then, if they did have the intelligence about that capability in addition to the other things you mentioned, was pushing hard enough for protections from what we thought the capabilities might have been?

Secretary PERRY. I think that protection is the responsibility of the commanders, not of the people who are giving the intelligence assessment, and they take that responsibility. They based their vulnerability assessment, as I said, on a wide variety of threats. But it is also clear that the specific actions they took relative to force protection would have been effective, much more effective, against a 200-pound bomb than a 3,000-pound bomb.

Senator HUTCHISON. Were there any significant pushes in security after the four suspects were executed in May from the November bombing, General Peay?

General PEAY. I am sorry, I did not understand your question.

Senator HUTCHISON. Were there any significant pushes for security after the May execution of the four suspects from the November bombing?

General PEAY. Yes, ma'am. After the OPM-SANG bombing, we instituted with vigor, a number of force protection measures.



Senator HUTCHISON. I am talking about the execution in May, not the bombing in November.

General PEAY. We had a number of force protection measures going on at that time. I do not think there was one thing directly tied to those executions other than our threat level was high, but the commanders were undertaking a number of force protection enhancements all through that period.

Senator HUTCHISON. Let me just reiterate a concern that I think Senator Lieberman outlined very well, and that is that we have watched terrorist attacks. We obviously do not have a great deal of experience but we have some experience, and you made the point that you had a chain of command where you put a lot of responsibility in your commanders at the colonel level down and up.

I am concerned that as leaders we are not overlapping the policy directions and the policy considerations which you say legislate, I do not call it legislation, I call it policy direction, from what we have learned from terrorist acts of the past that we did not immediately step in at a higher level and say we know from November after the bombing and there were steps taken, there were other steps put on the table that were in negotiation.

But I would like to just ask you if you are rethinking your position about leaving this kind of responsibility at the O-6 level, or O-7, without more direction from the top.

General PEAY. I don't want in any way to let my comments indicate that we in Central Command, or myself personally, are not fully involved in force protection, against terrorist kinds of activities with our youngsters up and down the chain of command. But I would suggest that this is very, very sophisticated, with a number of ways to attack and we can talk more about that in closed session today.

I simply don't believe that we can pick one, two or three things. I think we have to educate in our military school systems, we educate in our chain of command, we grow, we mentor, we do have policies that we have put out. But at the end of the day, you have got to let that commander at the final cutting edge of the spear make the right call.

Now, we run open commands. This is not a closed kind of thing. It is a very healthy chain of command and we do talk. Let me just take the fence issue, though. Here is what is in my mind all through. Brigadier General Schwaller is working probably 50 initiatives. He has got this fence that he is working with the Provincial Government. They have been given certain kinds of things. He is working another one over here. Perhaps it is the relocation of his people. So he says, I have got patrols out there. I am working better with the Saudi officials. I have got observers on top of the towers. I can cover that area against what he perceived was about a 200-pound bomb, plus or minus, threat.

So, he is working a number of issues and judgments. It is easy for me to go to the site and the first thing and say Gee, we should have pushed the fence out. I mean, I think that is a common-sense approach. You would think that. I am just suggesting today that we need to give the youngster his chance. He has got a lot of priorities. We should not second-guess him here from Washington today. This is very complex.

Finally, ma'am, I think we must be very careful about how we look at the art of command. It is in my 35 years' experience of how to command up and down the chain. I think I have tried to master that by holding people responsible by issuing directives. But, at various times, I have to give them their head. There is no magic or secret here.

Finally, I think terrorism is changing. We may have to issue, suggest, designate, that a certain thing will be immediately reported up. Maybe it is a vial of anthrax that is thrown over the berm of a perimeter. I am not sure where all of this is going. It is moving on us. I am not locked in concrete. If requirements are there that we need to have more exact information, certainly we will do that.

I want you to know today, though, I am engaged in force protection. I am engaged in it. I had my fire base over run as a captain in Vietnam. I understand force protection. I care about youngsters. Please don't let this hearing go by today thinking that I am not an engaged commander. I am engaged.

Senator HUTCHISON. Well, thank you, General Peay. I appreciate your saying that because I think the chain of command argument is theoretical but I think we are now getting experience, very hard won, that we should act on.

I will just end by saying that I have seen officials from previous administrations who have said that when you go to the highest level with the Saudis that they do accede to our requests and I would just hope that going to the top and setting a policy is not something you are not considering after this really bad experience.

Giving young officers their head is an admirable goal but I think in light of what has happened perhaps there needs to be a reversal of leadership trends as well.

Senator WARNER [presiding]. General Peay, before I go to the next Senator, if I understood you, you said the thing that has changed is we now know in the Middle East we can see a bomb of this magnitude. Is that what you said earlier?

General PEAY. I think historically now you have got, Senator Warner, a different circumstance. It was plus or minus 200 pounds at OPM-SANG. It is somewhere between 3-and 5,000 now.

Senator WARNER. I understand, but let us not forget Beirut, which was 18,000 in that truck.

General PEAY. There is some discussion on the explosive weight, difference in pounds versus blast.

Senator WARNER. Senator Glenn.

Senator GLENN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I heard that we were going to have the Saudi Ambassador, Prince Bandar, this afternoon; is that correct?

Senator WARNER. It is my understanding that the Chairman will soon announce that at the conclusion of the first round by all Senators here, we reconvene in S-407 at which time the committee would have an opportunity to hear the testimony of the Ambassador from Saudi Arabia to the United States, Prince Bandar.

Senator GLENN. I talked to him briefly. I know several members of the committee have already talked to him. I think he may be able to shed some light on this questioning of the prisoners and also the request for the perimeter moves so I would suggest we do

have that. I am not sure right after this meeting is the best time to do that because we have our respective party conferences coming up. But anyway, we might want to consider that at a different time.

Prevention of something like this is dependent on intelligence, to a large extent. That is the best way to prevent it, to know the problems in advance and yet, all this 20-20 hindsight that we are exhibiting here this morning comes from a lot of people in the Congress, not just here, not just on this committee, but in the Congress and over in the House, who voted at the same time to cut intelligence funds. I just think that is an interesting observation going past this.

I do not know, Mr. Secretary, whether you feel we have enough money in intelligence now or not, and particularly in the HUMINT that you mentioned. That is the most difficult kind to develop. It takes years and years and years. You cannot turn it on and turn it off by budgets going up and down, and yet, that is what we are depending on.

You cannot use overhead photography of satellites to pick out some of these terrorist groups. So, I would just ask, do you think we are putting enough into INTEL, number one.

Secretary PERRY. I think in the area of HUMINT we need a greater priority and greater resources. In the other areas I think we are well covered.

Senator GLENN. I agree with that.

General Peay, what is the length of tours of people over there on this assignment?

General PEAY. Sir, it varies. As you look back over the past 5 years, we had units rotating very frequently. We have changed now to where some of the key leadership has a year rotation. The units involved, though, will rotate out sometimes at 45 and 90 days.

Senator GLENN. Okay. I was glad to hear you are considering moving out of Riyadh, or at least that may be a request we make one of these days. I do not see any reason at all why we keep people concentrated in an urban area after this. I know there is 20-20 hindsight.

General PEAY. Sir, we were studying that before this particular problem.

Senator GLENN. Well, you have sure got lots of land area over there. We have all been there and have seen the place. You have got lots of land area to play around in out there or to have people based in whether it is in inflatable structures or tents or whatever. With short tours like this, unaccompanied tours, this is a great training experience for our people over there out in the desert as well as they do not all have to be in air-conditioned places in town. We had air-conditioned places out in the desert for the hottest times, with the inflatable structures and all, during the Gulf War. I would think that something like that where you can even put up sand berms or you have a perimeter that goes out a mile in each direction if you want it to, I would think that is something we would surely want to consider for the future over there, particularly in that area. Without asking for a response on that, I hope we are considering that.



Mr. Secretary, in your statement, on page six of your written statement, "Some focused on preventing an attack similar to the November bombing. Other actions focused on preventing attacks of a completely different nature, and may have prevented a different type of attack from taking place. My assessment is that our commanders were trying to do right, but given the inconclusive nature of the intelligence, had a difficult task to know what to plan for."

We could push the perimeter out another 500 yards or half a mile and you are still going to be subject to terrorist attacks. Chemical weapons could be manufactured by any well organized terrorist group. As I understand it, we do not have a perfect inventory on chemical weapons and it seems to me that being out of the urban area, out of the concentrated area, is your best defense against things like chemical attacks or BW attacks. You mentioned anthrax a little while ago. Having the perimeter back another 100 yards, or so, over there at the Khobar Towers would not have prevented a tragedy from a chemical weapon that was spread upwind on a calm evening, or something like that.

Are you addressing those kinds of attacks in your assessment as well, Mr. Secretary, and do all our services have instructions to consider their force protection, consider it not just a bomb that we know can blow up? We know that from the World Trade Center, Oklahoma City, Beirut, and Riyadh. But we also have to prepare for CW, which may be even more easily brought into a compound or some place than any high explosive weapon. Would you comment on that and what we are doing in that area.

Secretary PERRY. In our consideration of attacks we are looking at attacks with big bombs, little bombs, attacks on transportation and facilities, attacks on our food supply and water supply, chemical attacks, water attacks. All of these are ways to which we would be vulnerable.

On nearly all of these we have actually taken a number of very concrete actions. That was what led me in my statement to say that with some of the actions we have taken, we have not seen the attack follow, and it could be because the action we took served to make that kind of an attack infeasible.

Senator GLENN. General Peay, would you comment on that?

General PEAY. Sir, we are looking at a full range of those things. Again, as you look across the 20 countries and the amount of urbanization, I think what we feel at this time, we need to see if we cannot get our people into a place where we are just better protected, though, from some form of control or blast. But certainly the magnitude of what you are talking about makes this problem even more difficult.

We are trying to address some priorities. We are also trying not to turn around here in 3 or 4 years and say, okay, we moved out there but here is a whole different threat that we have to address.

Senator GLENN. Are there other threats you are assessing also in addition to just our people there? For instance, we have a lot of Stinger missiles, and things like that, that are unaccounted for. The Russian version of that, we have had thousands of those that are unaccounted for. They do not even keep them by serial number like we do.

Those are all over the Mideast. I have been surprised somebody had not shot down an airplane over there with Stinger missiles as a troop transport comes in. Is that something we are also looking at?

General PEAY. Sir, we are discussing it. I think what you are correctly pointing out is what I have tried to say today, that in the Gulf, as different from the Middle East, there is a changing threat that our country has now got to come to grips with.

Senator GLENN. I will just say in closing then, my time is up, I advocated keeping the same intelligence budget we had before, even increasing it, because I think our intelligence needs to be increased with the demise of the Soviet Union or the end of the Cold War—I think our needs increased instead of lessened.

If we ever do go back to war again, I hope it is with the best intelligence base and the best research base on which to build, those two things that I think we tend to cut back on in peacetime and that is absolutely the wrong move to make. So, the best way to prevent these things is knowing about them in advance, and that is the toughest part of this thing.

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator NUNN. Mr. Chairman, could I borrow one minute, just one minute here? I think it is very important that this whole matter of force protection be put in perspective. There is no doubt that force protection is an extremely important part of any mission and there is no doubt that that has to be one of the top priorities. There is no doubt mistakes were made here, and inevitably will be made again, particularly with the threats that Senator Glenn has talked about, with chemical and biological. No perimeter is going to solve that problem.

But it is also important to understand that when we have people all over the world, they are out there protecting our vital national security interests and that force protection, as important as it is, is not the only mission. I hope we do not come out of this hearing with the mentality that the only thing that a commander does in the field protecting our national interest, is to protect the force. Because if that is the whole mission, then we will have a bunker mentality and we will not be able to protect America's national interests and the largest super power in the world will find itself immobilized.

I also hope, and I think all the questions have been very appropriate this morning, but I hope we do not come to a conclusion that zero casualties is possible in the military, or really, for that matter, in any kind of risky endeavor. It is just impossible.

That does not mean we do not do everything possible to get better prepared and protect our people as well as they can possibly be protected, but if we adopt the attitude here in the committee and in the Congress that our goal, realistically, is zero casualties in the military, we would have to stop training. We have hundreds of casualties, I do not have the numbers now, in all our services in training and preparing for the worst possible contingencies so we lose less lives in the long-run. Training accidents are going to happen. Casualties are going to happen in training, and we try to minimize those. But it is in the effort to train that we reduce overall casualties in conflict.

So, I hope we do not give the impression that we are beginning to move this country toward a zero-casualty expectation. That will make it impossible for any military commander to be able to perform their job. So, I hope that that message is clear.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND [presiding]. Senator Kempthorne.

Senator KEMPTHORNE. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. May I say to the three gentlemen that I know this has to be a difficult hearing for you because all of us mourn the loss of these Americans, and I appreciate your being here today. I would like to submit my statement for the record.

[The prepared statement of Senator Kempthorne follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR DIRK KEMPTHORNE

The latest toll of American lives and casualties should serve to remind this Nation's leaders exactly how costly it can be to honor commitments they make to our allies, how vital it is to weigh such agreements before signing them, and how important it is to safe guard the lives of U.S. service members charged with executing these agreements. We should never compromise or relax our security requirements in an effort to appease a host nation. Beirut, Riyadh and now Al-Khobar are morbid specters of our inability to deter or counter terrorism. The ingredients of religious fanaticism and uncertain political alliances will always remain an explosive formula.

The United States and its allies are currently engaged in several peace keeping missions world wide. Last month, NATO's first peace keeping mission reached the halfway mark in its one-year commitment in Bosnia. A sense of complacency—that these operations are not dangerous—is starting to develop amongst our military units engaged in these activities and the leaders charged with the responsibility of equipping and maintaining the force. Yet this tragic incident in Saudi Arabia just points out that even if we assign the term peace keeping and we deploy U.S. troops around the world in the name of peace it is still a dangerous mission. So those folks who say that because the Cold War is over and that we should just tremendously reduce our defense budget and not worry about providing all the best equipment to our soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines; well they are wrong. It is still an extremely dangerous world and this is just one more tragic reminder of that.

It strikes me as strangely odd that we are able to post guards around and thereby deter terrorists' actions against our vital material and technical assets—planes, tanks, and ships—yet we are not able to adequately protect our number one asset—our people, the men and women in uniform—against these very same terrorists.

Mr. Secretary, let me reference General Peay's opening comments. He went into some detail about the complex operational environment by which we operate in Saudi Arabia and he stressed that one of the things we need is to understand is the Saudi culture and way of doing business.

The General went on to say that what may appear as Saudi indifference or unwillingness is, in fact, a reflection of their difference of time. Decisions at all levels of Saudi Government are slow by U.S. standards.

In the questions that were directed at General Peay as to where the request came to extend the perimeter, General Peay made the point that had it reached him, he would have tried to deal with it at his level for several weeks, perhaps months before, acknowledging the culture, I believe, of the Saudis.

So, Mr. Secretary, my question to you is this: Is this administration allowing the culture of another country to stand in the way of us protecting our American troops?

Secretary PERRY. Senator Kempthorne, any time we are guests in another country or hosted by that country, we have to pay very careful attention to their culture, their laws. But we also have to



hold up a concept of force protection, and if those come in conflict then we have to decide in favor of force protection.

Senator KEMPTHORNE. Mr. Secretary, were we not in conflict?

Secretary PERRY. We were in conflict in this case, and therefore, we have to address the conflict. The debate in the hearing here is whether we addressed it at the right level. I can assure you, had it been brought up to my level, I would have been prepared to have gone to the highest levels in the Saudi Government to deal with this.

Senator KEMPTHORNE. But Mr. Secretary, in light of the fact we had previously had a terrorist attack in Riyadh, the fact that we had threats, the fact that we know that there are different cultural differences with the Saudi Government, in that atmosphere, is it appropriate for us to believe that all of this should have simply been handled by the military or the fact that this called for diplomats, and others within the administration to clear the way for an atmosphere that would allow force protection to be properly addressed?

Secretary PERRY. Senator Kempthorne, that is, I think, a very astute observation, and it guided my actions when I was in Saudi Arabia shortly after the bombing. I dealt at the highest level of the Saudi Government to make two points which I think determined the extent to which we can operate effectively in the future.

One of them is that we had to have full cooperation on the investigation. The other was that given the level of the threat we were now dealing with, we had to be prepared to move some of our bases out of the urban area and that we would require full cooperation with the Saudis on that.

So, we are already moving in that direction in these two areas. We have to deal with the highest levels of the Saudi Government in order to establish the framework which would allow our lower-level commanders to operate and particularly do the rebasing that is going to be necessary.

Senator KEMPTHORNE. Mr. Secretary, with all due respect, I believe we subordinated our culture, which is to protect our troops, to the culture of the host country, and I think it cost us.

Secretary PERRY. Senator Kempthorne, I can tell you that we never consciously decided to do that. Certainly I never did, and I do not believe any of our senior commanders ever did it either.

Senator KEMPTHORNE. General Shalikashvili, we have discussed at this hearing the fact that there has been a changed threat to our forces. We now are dealing with terrorists. Does it suggest that we need to reexamine where we base our forces to carry out operations such as they are currently carrying out in Saudi Arabia. Offshore, should these planes be aircraft carrier planes as opposed to land based?

General SHALIKASHVILI. I think in that particular region we maintain for a considerable period of time each year aircraft carrier offshore in order to provide us the additional air power. I do not believe that on a day-to-day basis you would be able to sustain that. But we certainly need to do the rebasing that Secretary Perry talked about and that was something under discussion before the Khobar bombing.

I think we can put ourselves into a much more secure position than our forces are, for instance, in Riyadh. That, in combination with retaining a periodic presence offshore with a carrier to provide that added air power, as we do right now, I think is appropriate.

But I do not believe you can have the flexibility of having the kind of support aircraft, and all of that, without tying up our aircraft assets and leaving us vulnerable in some other parts of the world.

Senator KEMPTHORNE. Secretary Perry, based on the information that you have to date, do you feel that there may be a connection between the terrorist attack in Riyadh, and perhaps the subsequent execution of those terrorists, and what took place at Khobar Towers?

Secretary PERRY. In order to get a definitive answer to that question, we are going to have to have the investigation now underway completed. I would be happy in closed session to discuss with you—

Chairman THURMOND. Mr. Secretary, the people in the back of the room cannot hear you. Speak a little louder.

Secretary PERRY. I said I would be happy to discuss in closed session my best judgment on that based on the investigation to date. But I can tell you there is not a definitive answer to that question yet.

Senator KEMPTHORNE. Mr. Secretary, a final question, then. Do you feel that the administration is fully engaged with the Saudi Government so that the request, such as that by the FBI that they be included in both the investigation and all leads leading to the apprehension of these terrorists, will be conducted in a coordinated fashion with the United States?

Secretary PERRY. I believe that is the case. I have been assured by the King, and Director Freeh has been assured by the Minister of Interior, that will be the case. We must insist on that.

Senator KEMPTHORNE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Robb.

Senator ROBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman

Gentlemen, I must say that I have been frustrated sitting here for 3 hours listening to the testimony, not to the testimony that you have given but to the impression that I am afraid may be left about where our military is today, where our intelligence community is today and the implication, at least, of a failure of either leadership, sound advice, or good judgment, whatever the case may be.

It seems to me that we ought to acknowledge very openly that we are on the very front edge of a long, steep learning curve with respect to terrorist activities, and I think that you have implicitly, and in some cases explicitly, suggested that today.

But I worry about the second-guessing, whatever you want to call it, in terms of being able to discern exactly what a specific vulnerability was in a specific situation and draw broader conclusions about where we are based on that particular matter.

I would urge colleagues who have not already done so to take advantage of intelligence briefings, to stay for the closed session, and to meet with Prince Bandar. I discussed the matter with him at

some length yesterday. Senator Glenn and I met with him again this morning. I think he can provide useful information that addresses several of the questions that have been troubling Senators. If you have not already availed yourself of that, I suggest that you do.

Let me ask a question that has not been formally presented but seems to me—let me make a point before I do General Peay because, I feel very strongly about the point that you made with respect to allowing some latitude of judgment for command. With all due deference to colleagues, and I will be a Member of one if I have to, I think that if we take away that latitude, we are going to destroy the officer corps, the senior NCOs and what we expect, and indeed what we, in effect, hire on people who serve in the military to do.

Again, I do not mean to in any way diminish the very serious question that was presented, but if, in a broader sense, all the tough questions are immediately kicked all the way up the line, we are eating away at almost everything that our traditional force structure, not only in the military but throughout the rest of society, stands for, and I think it would be a serious mistake.

So, I would ask you to hold your ground, be ambivalent about whether or not you would do something in this particular case because of the seriousness of the question, but do not suggest that that is standard operating procedure for any question that seems to be a little bit difficult or we will begin a cancer.

Let me ask you to comment on the question of tradeoffs, if you will. Not explicitly stated, but implicit, is a trade-off between security risks and quality of life, livability, and in many instances, we are talking about whether or not you put people in a buttoned up atmosphere, whether you put them in flak jackets, whether you put them in gas masks, whether you require them to sit in the cockpits, whether you require them to go through trenches to get back and forth or whether you assume that there is some level of risk that is necessary and acceptable in terms of how we get by day-to-day.

How likely is it that a threat is more important than the kind of morale problems you will have if you stick everybody in an un-air-conditioned facility when you know there is something else there. Would you discuss that just a little bit in terms of the kinds of choices that you are making so we do not look at this entirely in a black and white situation and suggest that we only go for the most secure environment in which our force protection can be administered,

Secretary PERRY. Let me comment on that, and then maybe General Shali and General Peay would like to add to it.

I want to say as strongly as I know how to that this threat of terrorism is very serious. We will face it again. We may face it again soon. We may face it in Saudi Arabia, we may face it in other countries in the Gulf, and we should understand that that is what we are up against.

Big bombs are only one aspect of the threat and not necessarily the most difficult aspect. We have the threat of chemical warheads, the threat of Stinger missiles, the threat of mortar attacks, all of these are components of the threat. Most of the questions today are



focused on this one aspect, and we have to understand that our problem preparing for this threat is much more complex than that.

I do want to tie on to Senator Nunn's point. We are dealing with that while we are trying to carry out our mission, which is why we are over there in the first place.

Now, if the mission is important, and I believe, and I have testified that it is, in the face of the kind of threats we are talking about, and understanding we do not want to have our soldiers living in bunkers 24 hours a day, we are going to have to rethink how we do the mission in rather fundamental ways.

It is not just a matter of moving the fence out another few hundred feet. It is not just a matter of putting Mylar in the windows. Those things can be done and should be done short-term. But we have to consider a very significant change in our basing altogether if we are going to stay there and do that mission. That is going to be difficult. It is going to be expensive. It is going to be complex.

But I believe that mission is important, and I believe that in order to carry it out, we have to make very fundamental, basic changes, not just because of the big bombs in particular, but because of the big bomb threat. Maybe General Shali or General Peay would want to add to that.

General SHALIKASHVILI. The only thing I would add is that it is so correct that we are there, wherever we go, to execute our mission, and so there is a limit on what we can ask our people to do and still remain 100 percent up to do the mission because everything we put on them or much of what we put on them for force protection detracts from their ability to do their mission, to be sharp, to be ready to go, mentally, physically. So, we need to balance those things.

In a place like Bosnia, we can afford to do certain things and we are required to do certain things. When you have a terrorist threat in the middle of Germany, as we did during Desert Storm, you are limited to what you can do. When you are in a place like Riyadh, you again have limitations on what can be done.

I am also mindful that we are asking men and women to be in the Armed Forces not just for the 3 weeks or 3 months that we ask them to deploy to Saudi Arabia, but when you go to Saudi Arabia you find that some of these people are there on the 4th, 5th, or 6th time around. So, for them this is a way of life. When AWACs crews are not in Saudi Arabia, you will find them in some other place where they have to worry about force protection.

So, we need to be mindful of those requirements to balance a quality of life for them and their families, for them to be mentally alert to do their mission first, and also, of course, to provide the force protection.

I think we have done very well. It has never been 100 percent all or nothing issue, but I think on balance, when I look at what armed forces have done for the last, I do not know how many, years in that area, by and large we have done that balancing act very, very well.

I think that here in Saudi, where we are now facing a much more difficult challenge, we, too, will find the right balance between moving out of urban areas between making sure that we have people there we need to have there, and that gets at some dif-

ficult issues, such as contractors and others, we need to take a look at, but I believe that we will find the right balance. We have done so in the past and I think we will do that here.

General PEAY. Sir, I agree with all of that. Again, I go back to my earlier comments, that in addition to what we call combatant troops, which will be the easiest ones to secure, because we will be able to move those units out in their totality and keep them together cohesively. It is all the noncombatants support units that are there, and they will be more difficult to protect.

Senator Nunn mentioned earlier today about trying to get these countries to start taking on more of their defense. We have 1500 advisors that are spread out all over Saudi Arabia in various urbanized towns where they are side-by-side with their Saudi counterparts as we try to improve their performance so that we can wean our way out of all of that.

So, I believe in balance, as we work through this, I would be unfair as a commander that is interested in, obviously, the readiness of the total force that the chiefs of our service have to provide. I have got to tell you, when you start to move organizations, though, it is going to cost money and that is going to be a consideration as we go down this road.

Senator ROBB. Unfortunately, the host nation, in this case, understands the responsibilities of burden-sharing and I have already had a discussion on that, so at least we will have cooperation, as the Secretary acknowledged.

Mr. Chairman, could I ask one exit question that they can probably answer with a yes or no.

Chairman THURMOND. Go ahead.

Senator ROBB. Gentlemen, is there anything that you have discovered to date that, based on the examination of the facts, not based on the fact that we had this specific terrorist incident that occurred but based on the general readiness, that you would have clearly have done differently or clearly represents, in your judgment, a failure to take appropriate action absent the higher indication of this particular threat or any other threat.

In other words, is there anything that you can cite to date that would reflect the kind of error that would be culpable and that we ought to be very much concerned about, putting aside the terrible tragedy that occurred with this particular munition?

Secretary PERRY. With all respect, Senator Robb, that question is so portentous that I want to defer my answer until I get General Downing's report. He is looking precisely at that question and any question that involves culpability. I want to be very well informed, very well researched before I answer it.

Senator ROBB. I think that is a responsible answer and I will not even ask the Generals to comment on that.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

Chairman THURMOND. Thank you.

The first round is now over. The committee will now move to room S-407 for an executive and classified session on this matter. The committee will confer in executive session with the Ambassador from Saudi Arabia and then continue with testimony from Defense officials in classified session.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

# QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DIRK KEMPTHORNE

SIZE OF THE BOMB USED AGAINST U.S. MILITARY FACILITIES IN SAUDI ARABIA ON  
JUNE 25, 1996

Senator KEMPTHORNE. Have you revised your estimates or do you still believe that the Al-Khobar blast was not greater than 5,000 pounds?

Secretary PERRY. The 5,000 pound estimate of the bomb's size was found in early media accounts of the incident. Since then, the Defense Special Weapons Agency, in conjunction with the Army Corps of Engineers Waterways Experiment Station, after extensive analysis and testing, has concluded that the Khobar Towers bomb likely had an explosive yield of 20,000 pounds or more. A peer review by a panel of outside experts from the Institute for Defense Analyses concluded that "the DSWA analysis credibly supports the conclusion that the explosive power of the bomb was in the 20,000 pounds of TNT equivalent class and probably larger."

## USE OF CARRIER-BASED AIRCRAFT FOR OPERATION SOUTHERN WATCH

Senator KEMPTHORNE. With the advent of the Al-Khobar bombing is it possible and or more prudent to execute this vital mission using only carrier-based aircraft?

Secretary PERRY. Carrier-based aircraft make important contributions to Operation Southern Watch today, and although the mission could be accomplished using only carrier-based aircraft, it is not the preferred choice. Carriers do not include mission-enhancing aircraft such as the RC-135 RIVET JOINT, and U-2 surveillance aircraft. Second, given recent force reductions, dedicating one or more carrier battle groups to Operation Southern Watch on a permanent basis would limit the Nation's ability to provide timely flexible deterrent options to other critical areas should a crisis or contingency require. Third, the presence of land-based aircraft can often act as the land-based component of a multifaceted strategy for regional coalition building by providing a nucleus for multi-national participation ashore.

## SAUDI POLICE TRANSFER OF INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION

Senator KEMPTHORNE. A briefing provided by an Air Force official a day after the bombing cited the disclosure of a suspicious looking truck seen about three weeks prior to the blast. The truck reportedly had been seen near the western side of the compound by a Saudi woman who alerted her husband. The man, in turn, told Saudi police and provided a license number. Ironically, the Air Force briefer said base security officials learned of the incident only Saturday (6/29)—four days after the bombing. Can you explain the time lack in the transfer of information?

General SHALIKASHVILI. Air Force Security personnel investigated this incident and verified that information was passed to Saudi officials regarding a suspicious truck that was seen near the Khobar Tower complex. The Air Force was unable to determine a specific reason for the delay in transfer of information.

Senator KEMPTHORNE. Why were our forces among the last to know?

General SHALIKASHVILI. Any specific reason would be speculation on our part as to why Saudi officials did not relay the information sooner. We are working to enhance personal and professional relationships between key Saudi and US officials to help ensure full cooperation and exchange of information in the future.

Senator KEMPTHORNE. What is being done to correct this deficiency?

General SHALIKASHVILI. To develop better personal and professional relationships between key Saudi and US officials, and hopefully greater cooperation and coordination between our countries, we are increasing tour lengths for key US personnel, including the commanders of the Office of Special Investigation and Security Police.

Senator KEMPTHORNE. In the wake of the Al-Khobar blasts and given that the installation and others in Saudi Arabia had heightened levels of security due to previous bombing and subsequent threats.

- Do you feel that the security that is provided currently for U.S. installations is adequate? Do you have confidence that the Saudis are, in fact, paying enough attention to our concerns about security, that they are up to this task, and will cooperate?

- Was every precaution taken to safe guard the lives of our men and women in uniform?

- What would you have done differently?

General PEAY. [Witness did not respond in time for printing. Any answer received will be retained in committee files.]



## THREAT ASSESSMENT FOR OPERATION PROVIDE COMFORT IN TURKEY

Senator KEMPTHORNE. What is the current threat assessment regarding terrorist attacks on U.S. military personnel serving in the Provide Comfort operation in Turkey?

Secretary PERRY. The Defense Intelligence Agency and U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations assesses the terrorist threat in Turkey as "High." The terrorist threat comes largely from two terrorist groups: the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C) and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

The DHKP/C (formerly known as the Revolutionary Left-DEV SOL) is an extremely violent, Marxist-Leninist, anti-U.S./NATO, urban terrorist force seeking to establish a worker's revolution to overthrow Turkey's existing form of government. DHKP/C's anti-U.S. philosophy makes it a direct threat to Americans in Turkey. Historically, DHKP/C has committed well-planned, precise attacks against specific targets, rather than hitting targets of opportunity. In Feb 91, they assassinated a VBR contract employee from Incirlik Air Base outside his apartment in Adana. About the same time, they assassinated another VBR contract employee in Istanbul and attempted to kill a USAF lieutenant colonel in Izmir. Since that time, the organization has been weakened by factionalization and in-fighting, but they still possess the desire and ability to target and carry out attacks against Americans and NATO targets throughout Turkey.

The PKK is a Kurdish military insurgency group whose goal is the establishment of an autonomous homeland for the Kurdish people in what is now southeastern Turkey, western Iran, and northern Iraq and Syria. Its origins can be traced back to the early Seventies, when it emerged from early left-wing Kurdish groups being formed of students attending universities in Ankara. On 15 Aug 84, the PKK began an armed struggle against the Turkish government by attacking several security locations throughout the southeast. Since that time, conditions in the area have continued to deteriorate, slowly becoming a localized civil war. Farther west, the PKK has brought their struggle to the larger cities in Turkey in the form of urban terrorism. PKK tactics have included attacks on Turkish National Police stations and vehicles, bombings of government buildings and assassinations of PKK dissidents and ethnic Kurds who aren't forthcoming with support for the cause. At this time, the PKK threat to U.S. personnel and resources in Turkey is considered largely indirect in nature, but this could conceivably change at any time. Even without direct targeting the level of violence and the indiscriminate nature of PKK attacks put U.S. personnel in Turkey at risk of being unintended victims.

The primary threat to U.S. military members continues to be becoming collateral victims in ongoing terrorist attacks occurring daily in Turkey. Due to the ongoing political changes throughout the Middle East and Europe, there could be an increase in state-sponsored terrorism in Turkey. Such attacks are more likely to occur when there are increased political tensions with the non-NATO countries of the region.

## FORCE PROTECTION ACTIONS AT INCIRLIK, TURKEY

Senator KEMPTHORNE. What force protection actions have been taken at the Turkish base in Incirlik used by U.S. and allied personnel?

Secretary PERRY. U.S. personnel at Incirlik have been engaged in Operation PROVIDE COMFORT for over 5 years and have supported the United States' NATO commitments to Turkey for over 40 years. Throughout our tenure in Turkey, U.S. military and civilian personnel and their dependents have been subject to various degrees of terrorist threats. Out of necessity, they have been continuously conscious of those threats, and Incirlik's senior U.S. leadership has maintained a constant focus on risk avoidance and force protection.

For the past several years, the base has maintained a heightened, [deleted] security posture. This means that the entire base, including the Turkish Air Force which is responsible for perimeter security, has implemented increased anti-terrorism measures intended to provide increased protection for U.S. personnel and assets. Some examples of these measures include:

[Deleted.]

In addition to these and many other standard precautions, security is further tightened whenever specific threats to U.S. personnel or interests are identified or in response to heightened regional or Turkish national tensions. For example, during the recent Turkish Parliamentary elections, travel to the nearby city of Adana was restricted to trips for Official Business Only (OBO). Even those U.S. personnel who live on the economy in Adana were restricted to home-to-work travel only. Such OBO restrictions, as well as placing areas "off limits," are techniques employed

sparingly to further enhance our U.S. population's security awareness and to restrict them from travel to places where American, may be at risk.

#### SECURITY ENHANCEMENTS AT INCIRLIK FOLLOWING BOMBING IN SAUDI ARABIA ON JUNE 25, 1996

Senator KEMPTHORNE. Have we increased security at Incirlik in the wake of the recent terrorist attack in Saudi Arabia?

Secretary PERRY. Yes. Immediately after learning of the attack, the 39th Wing Commander imposed a strict Official Business Only restriction on all personnel traveling to and from Adana and Incirlik Village. Additionally, numerous security and security awareness enhancements were instituted within the Wing and Combined Task Force PROVIDE COMFORT. These additional measures were designed to prevent unauthorized access to U.S. buildings and areas on Incirlik as well as to raise ever further our base populace's sensitivities to the need for risk avoidance.

A few specific examples of Incirlik's force protection enhancements, imposed in addition to those already in place under the increased security posture, [deleted] include:

[Deleted.]

Incirlik's senior U.S. leadership also informed their Turkish Air Force counterparts of the need to impose tighter security at base entry points and in U.S. housing areas. As a result, our hosts [deleted]

The new 39th Wing Commander is extremely sensitive to the need to keep his people safe and has made security his top priority. Despite significant resource constraints, the commander is taking positive steps toward enhancing the security of personnel living in Adana and Incirlik Village. To maximize the number of U.S. personnel living on base, he recently reopened 60 early 1960s vintage single family housing units. He has also hired private security guards for our housing complexes in Adana and has programmed unfunded requirements for concrete blast walls, Mylar window coverings, security surveillance equipment, and alarms for U.S. leased quarters in Adana.

#### MILITARY PERSONNEL IN IRAQ

Senator KEMPTHORNE. How many, if any, U.S. military personnel spend time in Iraq as part of Operation Provide Comfort?

General SHALIKASHVILI. Presently, there are [deleted] at the Military Coordination Center northern Iraq.

#### MILITARY PERSONNEL IN IRAQ

Senator KEMPTHORNE. What force protection policies are in place to protect these Americans?

General SHALIKASHVILI. At the Military Coordination Center, MCC, [deleted] that control vehicle movement and parking around the MCC house. To lessen the risk of ambush during road patrols, MCC commanders [deleted]

The security zone does contain unexpended ordnance and known areas are mapped out and updated with information provided by local populace. Finally, the MCC is operating under a modified [deleted] security is emphasized, and personnel are aware of the threat.

#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE

##### ADEQUATE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DEPLOYED TROOPS

Senator INHOFE. It has been reported that accommodations at Khobar Towers consisted of 1 officer or airman to a room. It is also apparent that 7 months passed between the first request for an expanded perimeter and the bombing in Dhahran, with no attempt to move troops towards the inside of the compound. While I am a strong advocate of quality of life issues for our men and women in the Armed Forces, an appropriate balance must occur between quality of life and force protection, especially when a "HIGH" threat condition has been declared.

Can the Department define the minimum standard for adequate quarters while troops are deployed?

General SHALIKASHVILI. DOD is in the process of changing guidelines for force protection into standards. While every situation differs, and therefore requires differing force protection measures, we do believe performance-oriented standards can be established. We are currently reviewing our standards document, due to be published in early 1997, that will give commanders standard guidance on how to im-

prove security at quarters dependent on the threat they face. The intent is to give commanders a set of evaluated security standards to choose from and still give them the flexibility to tailor their security to the specific threat.

Senator INHOFE. Is this standard different for the different services (for instance, U.S. Air Force vs. U.S. Marine Corps)?

General SHALIKASHVILI. When DOD 0-2000.12-H is published, it will set standards applicable to all the Services. It will, however, accommodate the differing operational requirements of the Services. For example, the THREATCON system provides measures for both land-based and sea-based operations.

Senator INHOFE. What is the current state of accommodations at Khobar Towers (min/max personnel per room/suite)? Are the troops that now reside at Khobar Towers living below the minimum lodging standards set by the Department?

General SHALIKASHVILI. There are currently no U.S. personnel located at Khobar Towers. All U.S. personnel who were located there have re-deployed to Prince Sultan Air Base, Eskan Village, and two sites on or near King Abdul Aziz Air Base, Dhahran. All of the above sites have increased force protection measures in place that include [deleted].

Senator INHOFE. If the current accommodations are not below the minimum levels set by the Department, why weren't troops moved towards the center of the compound when it appeared that approval of the perimeter expansion was not imminent?

General SHALIKASHVILI. There were no minimum stand-off distances established by the Department. The commander's force protection efforts were directed toward keeping threats from entering the compound. The request to the Saudi government was to move the fence an additional 10-15 feet to provide an additional clear zone to allow expanded U.S. observation of the exterior. This distance would not have mitigated the effects of the blast.

The attack succeeded because our forces were deployed in a location that made defense against such an unprecedented sort of attack uniquely difficult. The terrorist used a bomb almost 100 times larger than the one used to attack the office supporting the Saudi Arabian National Guard (OPM-SANG) in November 1995. They demonstrated that they could successfully surmount the many challenges necessary to carry out such an attack—clandestinely accumulating and employing a large amount of explosives, developing sophisticated intelligence, maintaining tight operational security, and penetrating the extensive Saudi domestic security apparatus and the measures we had taken for force protection. The Commander purposefully spread out the living quarters in Khobar Towers throughout the compound, so as not to concentrate personnel, and to avoid the threat of a penetrating attack such as Beirut, or a stand-off attack using rockets as demonstrated in the hills of Lebanon.

DOD 0-2000.12-H, which will become DOD's standards document in early 1997, will clearly indicate that Commanders will develop plans to protect forces both inside and outside the compound perimeter. It will specifically note the importance of stand-off distances for the protection of exterior perimeter buildings.

Senator INHOFE. What is required to bring the accommodations and facilities at the al-Kharj Air Base or other protected installations up to the minimum standards set by the Department and how soon could troops be re-deployed?

General SHALIKASHVILI. Although DOD 0-2000.12-H, which outlines the new DOD force protection standards, has yet to be published, the draft has been sent to all CINCs and Services in order to provide guidance. As of 2 October 1996, all personnel have relocated to Prince Sultan Air Base and Eskan Village outside of Riyadh. The facilities at these two locations are in a constant state of improvement and upgrade. In early 1997, enhanced temporary infrastructure/support facilities will be constructed, and these structures will continue to be improved. All facilities will be constructed based on CENTCOM's security standards. At a minimum, these standards protect our troops from [deleted].

#### EXCHANGE OF INTELLIGENCE DATA BETWEEN THE U.S. AND SAUDI ARABIA

Senator INHOFE. I am concerned that like the local commanders in Dhahran that didn't "bubble-up" their concerns to their chain of command, the FBI and other Intelligence groups did not "bubble-up" their inability to interview the Riyadh terrorists nor their lack of cooperation from Saudi Intelligence until well after the execution. I am also concerned that differences in organizational cultures are hindering the most effective exchange of data between the FBI and other Defense Intelligence groups.

What "lessons-learned" from Riyadh and Dhahran are being applied to improve the Department's receipt and processing of critical intelligence information?



General SHALIKASHVILI. We continue to improve the integration of intelligence into operational planning. The Joint Staff has created a Directorate for Combating Terrorism which is now up and running. The directorate is fusing intelligence received from the field with the operational force responses. The element also integrates inputs from the unified commands to give us a better picture of threat reporting and force protection responses. [Deleted].

[Deleted]. Finally, we have learned that we need to push experienced-terrorism analysts in the high threat regions to help commanders make sense of the myriad of threat reports and suspicious activities. [Deleted].

Senator INHOFE. Do you feel that the Department is receiving intelligence information of a quality necessary to reduce the possibility of another terrorist attack against U.S. forces?

General SHALIKASHVILI. [DELETED].

Senator INHOFE. Are there changes to current Intelligence processes that the Department wishes to make but are not occurring because of clashes in organizational culture?

General SHALIKASHVILI. The short answer is no. [Deleted].

[Whereupon, at 12:41 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]



# **DOWNING ASSESSMENT TASK FORCE ON THE BOMB ATTACK ON KHOBAR TOWERS IN SAUDI ARABIA, AND OTHER ISSUES RELAT- ED TO U.S. POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

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**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1996**

**U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,  
*Washington, DC.***

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:20 p.m. in room SR-222, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Strom Thurmond (chairman) presiding.

Armed Services Committee members present: Senators Thurmond, Warner, Cohen, McCain, Coats, Kempthorne, Hutchison, Frahm, Nunn, Exon, Levin, Bingaman, Glenn, Robb, Lieberman, and Bryan.

Committee staff members present: Romie L. Brownlee, staff director, George W. Lauffer, deputy staff director, Donald A. Deline, general counsel, and Christine K. Cimko, press secretary.

Professional staff members present: John R. Barnes, Lucia M. Chavez, Lawrence J. Lanzillotta, Paul M. Longsworth, John H. Miller, Bert K. Mizusawa, Cord A. Sterling, and Eric H. Thoemmes.

Minority staff members present: Arnold L. Punaro, minority staff director, David A. Lyles, minority deputy staff director, Richard D. DeBobes, counsel, Michael J. McCord, professional staff member, Julie K. Rief, professional staff member, and Peter Levine, minority counsel.

Staff assistants present: Patricia L. Banks, Cristina W. Flori, J. Reaves McLeod, and Sharen E. Reaves.

Research assistant present: Pamela L. Farrell.

Committee members' assistants present: Judith A. Ansley, assistant to Senator Warner; Ann E. Sauer, assistant to Senator McCain; John Molino, assistant to Senator Coats; Thomas L. Lankford, assistant to Senator Smith; Glen E. Tait, assistant to Senator Kempthorne; David W. Davis, assistant to Senator Hutchison; John F. Luddy, II, assistant to Senator Inhofe; Patricia L. Stalnacker, assistant to Senator Santorum; Dan Stanley, assistant to Senator Frahm; Andrew W. Johnson, assistant to Senator Exon; Richard W. Fieldhouse, assistant to Senator Levin; Suzanne M. McKenna, assistant to Senator Glenn; Lisa W. Tuite, assistant to Senator Byrd; William Owens and Suzanne Dabkowski, assistants to Senator Robb; Frederick M. Downey, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Ran-



dall A. Schieber and Mary Weaver Bennett, assistants to Senator Bryan.

### OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR STROM THURMOND, CHAIRMAN

Chairman THURMOND. The committee will come to order.

The committee meets this afternoon to receive testimony on the report of the Downing Task Force assessment of the facts and circumstances surrounding the terrorist bomb attack on Khobar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia on June 25.

Our witnesses today are Secretary of Defense Dr. William Perry, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Shalikashvili, and General Wayne Downing, U.S. Army, retired, the director of the Downing Task Force.

Our hearing today is a follow-on to the hearing the committee held on July 9, at which Secretary Perry, General Shalikashvili, and General Peay, the Commander-in-Chief of CENT Command testified about the terrorist bombing attack on Khobar Towers.

Gentlemen, I am going to recite a quote which everyone in this room and those listening to this hearing have heard many times. I can think of no other time when this quotation has been more meaningful and appropriate, and this is the quote: Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

Mr. Secretary, terrorism is a threat faced by all U.S. forces and personnel stationed or deployed overseas. Consequently, they need some understanding of the terrorist threat and how to combat it.

Our past history includes terrorist attacks against U.S. military forces stationed in Europe and in the Middle East. They include the disco bombing in Berlin in the 1970's, a terrorist bomb attack in Beirut in 1983, and the November 1995 terrorist attack against U.S. forces in Riyadh. Average Americans would think that we have learned something from these instances about protecting our forces and progressed beyond the point at which we find ourselves today.

I have reviewed the findings and recommendations included in the Downing report. Frankly, to say I have grave concerns with what General Downing discovered in his investigation would be an understatement.

Mr. Secretary, it appears from the findings included in General Downing's report that we have not learned much from previous investigations of similar instances. For example, following a terrorist bombing of the marine barracks in Beirut in 1983 the Long Commission found that the command had failed to take adequate security measures commensurate with the increase in threat levels; 13 years later, the Downing Task Force has determined as a result of its investigation that U.S. forces and facilities in Saudi Arabia and the region were vulnerable to a terrorist attack, and that the command had failed to take adequate security steps.

In 1995, an assessment of the shoot-down of two U.S. Army UH 60 Black Hawk helicopters over Iraq, while not an act of terrorism, recommended a review of joint task forces worldwide to determine the appropriateness of their structure for their mission. Specifically, the questions were the appropriateness of the structure and the manning of temporary short-term contingency operations,

which for all intents and purposes had turned out to be a long-term operational commitment.

I understand progress reviews took place and recommendations were made to establish oversight programs to correct these situations. However, there was no adjustment to the structure and manning levels of the forces and area of responsibility of the Central Command, despite the long-term presence of U.S. military forces in Saudi Arabia and threat level conditions which were increasing.

The Air Force continued to maintain manning levels at a minimum level to reduce the visibility of U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia and to limit the impact on Air Force units worldwide. According to the Downing report, the minimum manning levels and the frequent rotation of personnel contributed to and hampered the ability of the security police to sufficiently man this post when the threat level increased.

In general, the Downing Task Force reviewed the recommendations of previous commissions, and based on my review, the bottom line is that this administration, and the Department of Defense specifically, has learned very little, if anything, from the past commissions and reports.

Over the past 4 years, as the missions of the joint task force—Southwest Asia have increased, the threat level and environment has increasingly become more hostile. Yet, the force structure and its support policies have not changed despite the November 1995 terrorist attack against U.S. personnel in the Office of the Program Manager for the Saudi National Guard.

Once again, a commission investigating a terrorist attack against U.S. military forces is pointing to manning levels which are insufficient to handle the mission and the terrorist threat to military forces in the region.

Mr. Secretary and General Shali, the American public has a right to know, as does the Congress, exactly what steps were taken by the administration and the Department of Defense following the November 1995 terrorist bomb attack.

At a press conference last Monday, Deputy Secretary of Defense White commented that following the November 1995 terrorist bombing in Riyadh, terrorist bombing in Saudi Arabia became a top security priority. Again, I would have to say that I am concerned by the failure to take appropriate action.

Based on our understanding of the Downing report, there were no standard policies and directives regarding post protection issues. I would like to know what policy guidance was issued by the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, or even by the commander-in-chief of the Central Command and the military services to their troops in the region with regard to enhancing post protection to guard against another attack of this nature.

Did you also determine that sufficient attention was being placed on ensuring that force protection guidance procedures and standards were adequate, or that they would have time to develop them and implement them at a future date?

I will end with this comment with regard to the defense budget. I am astounded at the lack of support from this administration regarding the amounts recommended by the Congress for the fiscal year 1997 defense budget. Despite the high priority placed on coun-

tering terrorism throughout this administration's tenure, the fiscal year 1997 defense budget sent to the Congress did not contain adequate funding for counterterrorism.

I am concerned about recent White House attempts to negotiate reductions—I repeat, reductions—in the fiscal year 1997 defense appropriation bill despite recommendations of the Downing task force to increase the budget for force protection. This comes on top of our recent moves to reinforce our forces in the Persian Gulf region with additional air power, sea power and ground forces. Additionally, there is an increase in the likelihood that we will have to maintain some military presence in Bosnia after the scheduled withdrawal date of December 20.

I would ask both Secretary Perry and General Shalikashvili to address this issue in their comments today. I would note for the benefit of committee members that a closed session will follow the open portion of this hearing. It will be conducted at the top secret level in the Intelligence Committee hearing room in Hart 219. Senator Nunn, do you have any comments to make?

#### STATEMENT OF SENATOR SAM NUNN

Senator NUNN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I do welcome our witnesses, Secretary Perry, General Shali, and General Downing. I commend Secretary Perry for appointing General Downing to head the assessment task force, and I commend General Downing for a comprehensive no-holds-barred and prompt assessment report.

I also commend Secretary Perry for taking prompt and, I believe, very serious action in response to General Downing's recommendations. I want to express my deep condolences, once again, to those fine Americans who lost their lives and my heartfelt wishes for a speedy and full recovery for those American airmen and the personnel of our allies who are still recovering from their injuries.

I also take note of the fact that one of the principle purposes of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 was, and I quote from section three of that act: To ensure that the authority of the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commands is fully commensurate with the responsibility of those commanders for the accomplishment of missions assigned to that command.

The act contained a number of provisions to effectuate that policy, including specifying that the authority of the combatant commanders include the command functions of:

(a) giving authoritative direction to subordinate commands and forces necessary to carry out missions assigned to the command, including authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training and logistics;

(b) prescribing the chain of command to the commands and forces within the command;

(c) organizing the commands and forces within that command as he considers necessary to carry out missions assigned to the command;

(d) employing forces within that command as he considers necessary to carry out the missions assigned to the command; and

(e) assigning command functions of subordinate commanders.



I was surprised to read in General Downing's report a finding that stated, "Current U.S. Central Command relationships do not contribute to enhance security for forces operating in the region."

That finding to me raises important questions, including, since the joint task force commander of Southwest Asia was in charge, as I understand it, of the mission and the operation, really, did it make sense to assign the protection of forces to components commanders located thousands of miles away? I believe that is what happened. I will go into questions on that.

Further, and this raises the Goldwater-Nichols question, is the policy of the Goldwater-Nichols legislation to enhance the authority of combatant commanders, and is that authority adequate and clear, or is further direction in law needed?

Next, is force protection part of the operational mission of the combatant commanders? Finally, have the command relationships that, quoting General Downing, "did not contribute to enhanced security for forces operating in the region" been corrected—the command functions, has that been corrected?

I will have other questions as we go along, but having gone through this command problem in Lebanon and seeing the tragic result there, I certainly think this question of command relationship deserves all of our careful attention.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND. Before we begin with Secretary Perry's statement, I would like to insert in the record Senator Inhofe's opening statement.

#### PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE

Let me take this opportunity to thank our guests for taking time from their busy schedules to brief this committee on an issue that will undoubtedly spur debate on what we could have, or should have done to have prevented this tragedy. We must all remember that this was a terrorist act! It was not the first, and it certainly will not be the last terrorist act against our troops.

I think it is important to point out the good things that existed in this situation before we address the more serious and grave leadership issues. Most importantly, the men and women of our Armed Forces that serve their country throughout the world, but specifically in this case, the Persian Gulf, have proven that they possess the qualities of leadership and dedication to duty that we should all aspire to. Specifically noteworthy were the soldiers and airmen that provided aid and comfort to their injured comrades as well as those that were able to persevere and resume operations in a mere 48 hours. As General Downing's report pointed out, the U.S. Marine Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team (FAST) stands out as a "model for development of service training programs". I also wanted to thank General Downing for his service to country in both his past endeavors as well as for this comprehensive report.

General Downing's report identifies serious problems not only during the time leading up to the bombing at Khobar Towers, but in terms of structural deficiencies in both the organization and leadership at all levels of the Department of Defense. While General Downing's report only identifies one name, that of Brigadier General Schwalier, I feel that leaders throughout the chain of command, from a former squadron commander to the highest leaders of the Department of Defense failed to meet the expectations of good leadership. It is not good enough, as a leader, to identify problems and then say that either I cannot do anything about those problems or that the situation I have been dealt does not allow me to correct them.

A good leader will overcome and persevere despite the obstacles placed before him. A good leader does not make excuses and try to absolve himself of responsibility by blaming those below him. A good leader accepts both the risks and challenges that responsibility requires of him. Captain Adolf Von Schell, a German infantry officer in World War I, writing in 'Battle Leadership' expressed that, "it appears that in the war of the future we will again be required to make decisions without satisfactory knowledge of the enemy." It is not acceptable to excuse the lapses in leader-

ship by referring to the lack of precise intelligence. The fact that every level of leadership in our Armed Forces, from the squadron commander to the Secretary of Defense, recognized that there was a high terrorist threat but did not act, is testament to the large void in positive leadership examples.

The Accountability Review Board found no individual responsible for the OPM/SANG bombing. Unfortunately, we find ourselves in the same situation today. It seems difficult to define accountability since responsibility for force protection has been spread almost universally across the Command.

Dr. Perry, while I feel it admirable that you have chosen to provide support to General Peay, it is imperative that all levels of leadership within your Department, including yourself, reflect inward to make a determination if they possess the requisite leadership skills to continue to provide a positive contribution to our Armed Forces. We owe at least that to the families and friends of the soldiers and airmen that were killed and wounded in this terrible attack.

Dr. Perry, you speak of encouraging our leaders to be innovative but it is just as wrong to be innovative if you are focusing on the wrong threats. It is not good enough that they simply be innovative. They must also put themselves into the mind of a terrorist and become partners with the intelligence gathering apparatus of our military. This is the responsibility of all our personnel in the field to ensure their personal survival.

Once again, I want to thank General Downing for his fine report. This must have been one of your most difficult tasks and I am confident that only good can come from the recommendations that you have described. Thank you very much.

Secretary Perry, we are glad to have you with us. You may make a statement.

#### **STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM J. PERRY, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE**

Secretary PERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On Monday night I returned from a trip to the Arabian peninsula, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. I went there to consult with key Arabian Gulf and coalition allies about how to respond to Saddam Hussein's latest acts of aggression and provocation. Let me give a very quick trip report, because what I did there was closely related to the force protection issue we are discussing today.

In 3 days I traveled 14,000 miles and met with the leaders of five countries, the heads of State and defense ministers of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Turkey, and Kuwait, then I stopped off in London on the way home and met with my British and French counterpart ministers.

I am happy to report to you that the coalition is alive and well, and it is united in its determination to condemn Saddam Hussein and to continue operation Southern Watch in its expanded form.

We are flying additional sorties from Saudi bases to enforce this expanded no-fly zone. We have bedded down additional strike aircraft, F-117's in Kuwait and F-16's in Bahrain, and we are sending 3,500 additional troops to fall in on the prepositioned heavy armored equipment in Kuwait.

Our British allies are in full agreement with us, and have joined us in a warning to Iraq to stop all operations that threaten our air crews. The French, while they are not in full agreement with us, are supportive and continue to participate in Southern Watch.

While I was in the region, I also visited our military forces there to review the measures which I have directed to protect them against terrorism. In particular, I visited with our air crew at the Prince Sultan air base in Saudi Arabia. These are the forces that we moved from Riyadh and Dhahran after the bombing at Khobar Towers.

I was there 6 weeks ago to get the approval of the Saudi Government for that move. The transformation in 6 weeks is stunning; 6 weeks ago, it was a large base, but a base which had not been used for several years. It had no housing. Today, it is a fully functioning facility supporting more than 100 sorties a day flying into Southern Iraq. This is a tribute to the outstanding work of General Peay and his Central Command team, and we should also credit the very strong support we have gotten from Prince Sultan, the Saudi Arabian minister of defense, and the Saudi Air Force.

The terrorists that attacked our forces in Saudi Arabia last November and last June failed in their first objective. They failed to drive a wedge between the United States and Saudi Arabia.

Now, we must ensure that the terrorists do not succeed in their other objective, to undermine America's will so that we will abandon our military presence, our interests, and our allies and go home. We must not do that.

So we need to start, then, with what is at stake. What is at stake are the same vital interests for which America fought in Desert Storm, to protect the vast energy resources of the region, to protect the stability of the region, to prevent Iraq from developing nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, and to protect freedom of navigation in the air and sea lanes in the region. These are vital American interests.

We are not in Saudi Arabia as a favor to any other country. We are there to protect our vital interest. We do have close cooperation with friends in the region, and after my visit, I can state to you flatly that they want us to remain, and that cooperation will continue.

Desert Storm ejected Saddam Hussein's armies from Kuwait, but it did not end his threats to the region. He has continued to ignore or obstruct the U.N. Security Council resolutions that define the terms of the cease-fire. He has also taken overt acts threatening peace in the region. Each time, we have answered quickly and decisively. Each time he has crossed the line, we have responded when necessary with military force.

We can do that only because we maintain a robust military force in the region. Therefore, I reject the option of withdrawing our forces. Clearly, the threat of terrorist attack against our forces poses a direct challenge to our force presence in Saudi Arabia. Indeed, the attack at Khobar Towers dramatically underscored that for our forces overseas, terrorism is a fact of life.

We can expect terrorists to try again to attack our forces. The next target could be anywhere in the region, or anywhere in the world. The next weapon could be a larger bomb, or a chemical weapon, or a nerve agent.

We still mourn for the five Americans killed in Riyadh and the 19 Americans killed at Khobar Towers, but we cannot restore them to their loved ones. What we can do is learn lessons from these tragedies, and the most important lesson is that Khobar Towers is a watershed event that points the way to a radically new mind set and dramatic changes in the way we protect forces from a growing terrorist threat.

We learned lessons after the Riyadh bombing last November. In response to that terrorist attack, we recognized that the Saudi



oasis of calm in that region had vanished, and we raised the threat assessment level in the kingdom to high. We beefed up security, including more than 130 separate force protection measures at Khobar Towers alone. These measures did succeed in preventing a penetration of the security perimeter, thereby undoubtedly saving hundreds of lives, but clearly they were not enough.

The Khobar Towers explosion was of unprecedented magnitude. Our Defense Special Weapons Agency, whom I assigned more than a month ago to make an assessment of this, assesses that the bomb was more than 25,000 equivalent TNT. That is about 100 times larger than the previous bomb used in Riyadh.

The attack was of an unexpected sophistication. The terrorists had well-developed intelligence, they maintained tight operational security, and they penetrated the extensive Saudi domestic security apparatus.

The scale of the attack partially circumvented the extensive force protection measures we took after the Riyadh attack and in response to intelligence indications.

We now know that we face an unprecedented threat. We must fundamentally rethink our approach to force protection, and we have done that along three lines. We are relocating, we are restructuring, and we are refocusing.

First, we are relocating. The location at Khobar Towers made defense against such an attack almost impossible. Therefore, we are moving our combatant forces to the Prince Sultan Air Base, whose remote location permits much more extensive security protection against terrorist attack.

I had the opportunity to review that when I was visiting the Prince Sultan Air Base. They have, for example, a 1,200-foot security perimeter all around the base, a single access road, with very, very tight controls.

Our noncombatant forces in Riyadh performed missions that require them to remain in that urban area, so we are consolidating them in Eskan Village and undertaking new security precautions there.

Second, we are restructuring. We are changing assignment policies, and we are bringing home most family members.

Third, we are refocusing. We realize that incremental fixes in force protection can always be defeated by attacks of greater magnitude. Force protection in this new threat environment is not simply more barriers and more guards. It requires a fundamental evaluation of how we prepare for, equip, and posture to do missions.

We have always been concerned about force protection, but now we must factor into our force protection plans the threat of sophisticated and massive terrorist attacks. As we decide where and how to deploy our forces overseas, we will place the threat of terrorism front and center.

Force protection against terrorist attacks will now be one of the most important considerations we weigh, along with other key mission tasks, when we decide how best to undertake a deployment, and we are examining our current missions in light of this threat to make sure that we have thought through force protection in the way we are carrying them out. This message has gone out to all of our commanders.

Hasn't force protection always been important? Of course it has. A good example is in Bosnia, where we face a variety of threats. When we approved the Bosnia mission, force protection was given a high consideration. Indeed, it was determined by the force commander to be a primary component of his mission.

That led to an extensive set of protection measures, including the requirement to wear flak vests when outside secure areas, a no-alcohol policy, and extensive and specific threat training for everyone who was deployed to the theater.

These were the right force protection measures for the Bosnia mission, and they have paid off very well for us. But while force protection has always been important, I now believe that we must expand the scope and increase the priority of force protection in every mission because of the elevated terrorist threat.

Putting force protection up front as a major consideration along with other mission objectives will require a change in the mind set with which we plan and carry out operations, and it will also require structural changes in the Department of Defense. It will require trade-offs in other areas such as cost, convenience, and quality of life for our troops. This will be a tough answer for our men and women in uniform who will live in less comfortable surroundings and spend more time avoiding and defending against terrorism.

When our air crews moved from Khobar Towers to the Prince Sultan Air Base, they moved from an air-conditioned apartment building to tents. This is not an improvement in the quality of life for them, but it will be protecting their lives.

It is also a tough answer for them and their families, more of whom must now experience the loneliness of unaccompanied tours.

The other important step I took after the Khobar Towers attack was to ask General Wayne Downing to give me a fast, unvarnished, and independent look at the incident and our force protection policies and practices in the CENTCOM region, and to offer ideas on how we can prevent such tragedies in the future. General Downing's report confirms my belief that we must make a fundamental change in our mind set, and we are responding to this report with an additional set of actions beyond the ones that I had already taken.

First of all, I am issuing a DOD-wide force protection standard.

Second, we will ensure that designated local commanders have full authority and responsibility for force protection.

Third, the Secretary of State and I have agreed to transfer responsibility for force protection for most of our noncombatant troops on the Arabian peninsula from the State Department to the Department of Defense, and we will consider this policy for other locations as well.

Fourth, we will take steps to improve terrorist collection on the terrorist threat, and making it more useful to commanders in the field.

Fifth, we will take steps to improve U.S.-host nation cooperation on force protection.

Sixth, we will raise the funding level and resource visibility for force protection, including efforts to seek out new technology. Finally, I am designating the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

as the single DOD-wide focal point for force protection, and in his testimony he will tell you more about how he is going to carry out that responsibility.

Since the first day that I have been the Secretary of Defense, my first priority has been for the safety and welfare of our forces. We have large forces, and they are often exposed to danger, and so we do have incidents where our military personnel are killed in accidents, in terrorist attacks, and in military conflicts. Each time this happens, I feel the loss deeply, and each time, I review what we can do to reduce the risk to our military forces in the future.

It was in this spirit that I asked Wayne Downing to conduct a study. I did not want a whitewash, I did not want a coverup. I wanted a hard-hitting analysis that gave thoughtful recommendations for real change.

Those of you who have had time to read this report will see that I got what I asked for, as I knew I would when Wayne agreed to be the chairman of this commission.

Now, it is up to General Shali and me to carry out those recommendations. I have already completed action on very extensive changes to improve protection of our forces in Saudi Arabia, which I have partly described to you by describing the move to the Prince Sultan Air Base.

I have approved and initiated action on the other important changes recommended by General Downing, and I have restructured our institutions so that these changes will endure. Endurance is important, because I believe the terrorists pose a serious threat to our forces today and will for many years to come.

Most of what I have described to you looks forward. It describes actions we are taking to provide and improve the protection of our forces from now on, but I must also be concerned with looking back, what led to the tragedy, and how do we determine responsibility?

The day that I received the Downing report, even before I read it, I sent it to the Secretary of the Air Force with a request to determine accountability and to consider possible disciplinary actions. The Air Force has subsequently established a convening authority for that purpose, which will report the findings no later than December 4, and we will take appropriate actions at that time.

I cannot comment further at this time on the culpability of individuals without exerting command influence which could prejudice their findings, but I also have to consider my own accountability. As the Secretary of Defense, I am responsible for the safety and welfare of all of our forces, and I feel this responsibility very deeply.

How do I manifest this responsibility? I cannot inspect every security fence, or determine the adequacy of every base force protection plan, but I can manifest this responsibility in four important ways:

First of all, by establishing the policies and the guidance for our commanders, including the policy and guidance on force protection.

Second, by organizing instruction in the Department of Defense in such a way that the force protection is optimal.

Third, by allocating resources to our commanders, including resources for force protection.



Finally, by carefully selecting and supervising the military and civilian leadership in the Department of Defense.

These are the criteria by which I judge myself, whether I am meeting my responsibility.

How well have we done on establishing the policy affecting force protection? We did have policy guidance for force protection which spelled out in considerable detail how force commanders should carry out their force protection responsibilities. General Downing has pointed out that they were not directives, and that they were not given sufficient emphasis and attention.

I believe that Wayne is right on that. This was my responsibility, and I have already taken the actions to change these two directives and to send orders to all commanders to increase the emphasis and priority.

Second, how well did we organize to carry out force protection responsibilities? Goldwater-Nichols made fundamental changes in our command structures. These changes have been incorporated, and I believe serve us very well.

In his report, General Downing has argued that while we meet the letter of Goldwater-Nichols in the force protection area, we do not meet the spirit, because the commander who has the responsibility is 7,000 miles away from the scene of the operations.

I believe, and General Shali believes, that he has a good point. We are adding that force protection responsibility to the joint task force commander who is on site, and considering more extensive changes. General Shali will discuss that more in his testimony.

How well have we allocated resources for force protection? We spend literally billions per year on force protection, and I believe that it is well spent, but General Downing is correct in saying that we do not have a budgetary focus on force protection, nor do we have a budgetary focus in our resource allocation process, the institutional process by which we decide how to pass funds out to different programs.

This is also my responsibility, and I concluded that it has to be changed. I am changing it in two different respects. First of all, I have directed the comptroller to organize and isolate and then aggregate all of the force protection features in our budget so that we can look at force protection as an entity, and this then gives us a handle on what is happening on force protection.

Having that handle, we then need somebody who can grab the handle and turn it, and so the second change is that I have designated the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, as the focal point within the Department of Defense for overseeing that responsibility.

That means, then, when the commanders in the field see issues and see problems that require budgetary support, that require new R&D, that require more resources, they can go directly to the chairman and he can grab that handle and get something done.

We have the handle if we want to build a new fighter airplane, or if we want to build a new submarine. We do not have it for force protection, and this change will accomplish that.

Finally, I have thought very carefully about my responsibility for the selection of our senior military leaders, in particular, General Shalikashvili and General Peay. I recommended both of them to the President with full confidence in their ability. I still recommend

them and I still have full confidence in their ability. They are superb soldiers with a distinguished combat record. They are strong military leaders. They are dedicated to the safety and welfare of their soldiers.

In spite of that, this tragedy occurred, and they are now working day and night to try to take actions which can prevent the recurrence of the tragedy.

If this Nation ever gets into a real military conflict again in Southwest Asia or any other place in the world, we will thank God that we have military leaders like General Shalikashvili and General Peay. So to whatever extent they are responsible for this tragedy, then so am I, for I supported them, and I still support them.

This is how I see my personal responsibilities. From my first day as the Secretary of Defense, I have put all of my energies and talents into carrying out the responsibilities of this vitally important job. I have enjoyed some substantial successes, and I am proud of those successes, but Khobar Tower was a tragic failure.

In the wake of this failure, many in Congress and the media are asking who is to blame. I will not participate in the game of passing the buck. We have a systematic and judicious process of military justice. We will let it proceed carefully and objectively.

In the meantime, I will not seek to delegate the responsibility for this tragedy to my military leaders. They have served their country with enormous distinction and considerable sacrifice. They deserve our gratitude, not our blame. To whatever extent you judge that this tragedy resulted in failures of leadership, the responsibility is mine.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my statement.

[The following information was received for the record:]

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
Washington, DC, September 15, 1996.

Dear MR. PRESIDENT: To achieve our strategic objectives and protect our vital national interests, the United States must maintain overseas force deployments. However, the June 25th terrorist attack on U.S. military personnel at Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia has dramatically demonstrated that the threat of sophisticated organized terrorism against our overseas forces, even in countries once considered safe and secure, is now a fact of life to which we must adapt immediately.

In November 1995, five Americans were killed in a bombing attack in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, while working in an office supporting the Saudi Arabian National Guard. Saudi Arabia is a country in which tens of thousands of Americans had lived safely prior to this attack. As a result of the attack, we hardened our facilities and tightened our security. In the Spring of 1996, we received intelligence indications which, while they lacked specificity, did warn us that new attacks were being planned and caused us to take further steps to protect our forces. Yet on June 25, another 19 Americans were killed in Saudi Arabia, this time by an attack much different in character. The terrorists not only used a bomb almost 100 times as large as the previous attack (the Defense Special Weapons Agency now believes it was more than 20,000 pounds), but they demonstrated that they could successfully surmount the many challenges necessary to carry out such an attack—clandestinely accumulating and employing a large supply of explosive materials, developing sophisticated intelligence, maintaining tight operational security, and penetrating the extensive Saudi domestic security apparatus and the measures we had taken for force protection.

The bombers succeeded in causing American casualties, but they did not succeed in their objective in driving us out of Saudi Arabia. (Indeed, our air patrol operations were fully functioning again only 3 days after the attack.) We must expect that terrorists will attempt additional attacks. To face threats of this sophistication, all of our leaders—civilian and military—must adopt a radically new mind-set with regard to international terrorism. We must undertake new policies and practices to protect our deployed forces.

This task would be easy if we were willing to abandon the national security interests our forces are deployed to protect. Since we must not abandon or compromise our protection of those interests, we must change the way we do business. Such changes will force new tradeoffs. They will cost more. They will burden our servicemen and women, who will endure more unaccompanied tours, live in less comfortable surroundings, and spend more effort avoiding, defending against, and defeating terrorists. We will have to compensate for these changes in order to continue to attract the superb quality soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines that today make up the best military force our nation has ever had.

The cost of these changes will not be trivial—in monetary terms alone it could amount to hundreds of millions of dollars each year in direct costs, and even more in indirect costs. Yet, after a comprehensive and thorough review of not only the Khobar Towers bombing, but also of the many force protection challenges we face elsewhere, I am convinced that we can do what we need to do without compromising our ability to protect our interests abroad.

With the publication of this report, I am announcing major changes in our approach to force protection. To begin with, as we decide where and how to deploy our forces overseas, we will place the threat of terrorism front and center, as one of the very important considerations we weigh when we decide how best to undertake a deployment. Our military commanders have always done, and will continue to do, what they must to accomplish the missions assigned them by the National Command Authority. But in deciding how to carry out a mission, protection of our forces against today's sophisticated terrorist threat must be given an even heavier weight in our planning than before. I am today directing that this be done, effective immediately.

The deaths at Khobar Towers were caused by the terrorist decision to attack the facility. The attack succeeded because our forces were deployed in a location that made defense against such an unprecedented sort of attack uniquely difficult. The decision on location was made using the force protection criteria in common use when the facility was occupied during the Gulf War. Khobar Towers was a convenient and economical residence and office, offered to us and paid for by the Saudis. It accommodated our servicemen in close proximity to their work and in relative comfort. But we faced a much larger and more sophisticated terrorist threat than we had expected, and our policies and procedures were not fully adequate and responsive to the new situation. The result turned out to be tragic—19 murdered and hundreds injured.

As you know, we moved immediately after the bombing to implement two major actions:

- (1) Relocate our forces to safer and more easily defensible areas; and,
- (2) Withdraw most of our family members from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

We made these changes because they provided us the best possible protection of our forces and their families consistent with completing the mission we had undertaken. Henceforth, we must take a similar approach when we pick deployment sites elsewhere in the world. Adopting this approach will be costly and will, in some cases, lead to a decline in the quality of life of our service personnel. Nevertheless, I believe that we can implement them without degrading our ability to carry out tasks assigned us by the National Command Authority.

We are also implementing today major initiatives to ensure that responsibility for force protection is rigorously defined. To begin with, I am requiring that each Commander-in-Chief (CINC) explicitly review the assignment of operational responsibility for force protection in every overseas deployment. I want every CINC to recommend the best approach to fit each situation. In this regard, the Commander-in-Chief of Central Command (CINCCENT) has directed that the Commander of the Joint Task Force—Southwest Asia assume responsibility for force protection of all combatant forces in his area deployed in support of Operation Southern Watch. He will also investigate the feasibility and advisability of establishing a CENTCOM forward headquarters that could assure force protection responsibilities for all forces on the Arabian Peninsula.

In addition, the Secretary of State and I have agreed that force protection for the major noncombatant forces deployed in Southwest Asia, previously under the responsibility of the Department of State, will now come under the responsibility of CINCCENT. I am also directing that all the CINCs review arrangements for noncombatant protection worldwide and recommend for my consideration adjustments they believe to be necessary.

Finally, to ensure that no aspects of this crucial problem go unattended, I am designating the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff the new responsibility as my principal advisor and the Department's focal point for all matters related to force



protection. The Chairman will establish within the Joint Staff an office dedicated to this mission. This office will review standards, doctrine, deployments, budgets, audit plans, technology development programs, and all other aspects of force protection policy and programs, and recommend any actions needed. To support this work, we will aggregate the major budgets relating to force protection to provide better decision making, and we will reach out to commercial industry for access to existing technology and help in developing new technology to enhance force protection capabilities.

These changes will ensure that responsibility is assigned clearly and receives the highest level of attention. We also need a statement of the standards we expect to be met. I am therefore issuing today a revision of DOD Directive 2000.12, "DOD Combating Terrorism Program." This directive will codify the various initiatives we have taken. It will also establish DOD Handbook 2000.12-H as the standard throughout DOD for force protection, requiring that the sensible approaches set forth in the Handbook be implemented wherever feasible.

The aggregate effect of these changes will enhance our approach to force protection:

- Placing force protection up front as a major consideration with other key mission goals;
- Forcing threat and force protection to be constantly evaluated; and,
- Empowering our commanders with the increased resources and flexibility to be fully responsive to changes in threat.

While the United States military will always reward and cherish leaders who show initiative and self-reliance in accomplishing mission tasks, we also take pride in ensuring that our commanders are given the proper resources to accomplish their objectives. Should commanders find they lack the resources or authority necessary to provide force protection, they will raise that deficiency to the next level of command, just as they would should they lack the tools necessary to accomplish any other key mission objective.

Mr. President, the attached report provides details on these and other initiatives we have taken in recent weeks, including the additional actions we are taking as of this date. The report's annexes include the classified version of the comprehensive report prepared by General Downing that has formed the basis for many of my initiatives, along with a detailed statement of how we plan to handle each of General Downing's specific recommendations. My report also describes the Khobar Towers incident itself, explains why we have been and should remain deployed overseas, particularly in the Arabian Gulf, and deals with other major aspects of General Downing's report, including the matter of personal accountability.

Regarding General Peay, I would note that I recommended him to you for the position of CINCCENT. Obviously, in light of the Khobar Towers event I have examined his performance in force protection and all his other responsibilities. After that review I wish to reaffirm my strong support. No one cares more about our troops than General Peay. He, is one of our most experienced combat officers and I can think of no better commander to have in charge of the CENTCOM region at this critical time.

Our great nation has witnessed casualties among our fighting men and women many times in our history, and we will undoubtedly witness more casualties in the future. Some of these losses will be to terrorists—no force protection approach can be perfect. Such risks are inherent in the business of defending our freedom and our institutions. Our national security requires us to perform missions throughout the world, and we cannot perform those missions while under cover in bunkers 24 hours a day. I am confident that as the new initiatives I am announcing today are fully implemented in the coming weeks, they will minimize the risks our forces face from terrorism, while keeping us fully engaged in the difficult business of defending our interests throughout the world.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. PERRY.

#### REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT ON THE PROTECTION OF U.S. FORCES DEPLOYED ABROAD

The attack on U.S. forces at Khobar Towers has dramatically underscored that for U.S. forces deployed overseas, terrorism is a fact of life. Every terrorist attack provides lessons on how to prevent further tragedies. However, the Khobar Towers attack should be seen as a watershed event pointing the way to a radically new mind-set and dramatic changes in the way we protect our forces deployed overseas from this growing threat. This report reviews the Khobar Towers attack, the context

of our Persian Gulf force deployments, the force protection measures taken before and after the attack, and lessons learned for all of our military operations.

#### THE ATTACK AGAINST KHOBAR TOWERS ON JUNE 25TH

Khobar Towers is a compound built by the Saudi Government near Dhahran that housed the residential quarters of almost 3,000 U.S. military personnel of the 4404th Air Wing (Provisional), along with military personnel from the United Kingdom, France, and Saudi Arabia. U.S. military personnel first occupied this compound in 1991 during the Coalition force buildup before the Gulf War.

Shortly before 10:00 p.m. local time on Tuesday, June 25, 1996, a fuel truck parked next to the northern perimeter fence at the Khobar Towers complex. Air Force guards posted on top of the closest building, Building 13 1, immediately spotted the truck and suspected a bomb as its drivers fled the scene in a nearby car. The guards began to evacuate the building, but were unable to complete this task before a tremendous explosion occurred. The blast completely destroyed the northern face of the building, blew out windows from surrounding buildings, and was heard for miles. Nineteen American service members were killed and hundreds more were seriously injured. Many Saudis and other nationals were also injured.

The response of our forces at Khobar Towers to this tragedy reflected their thorough training and bravery. The buddy system worked, and every injured airman received on-the-spot first aid before being escorted to the clinics. Medical teams, both military and civilian, American and Saudi Arabian, performed commendably without rest for many hours and, in some cases, despite their own wounds.

Once the immediate steps were taken to care for the injured, search for survivors, and account for everyone, the command of the 4404th Air Wing began to reconstitute itself to carry out its Southern Watch mission. In less than 3 days, the skies over southern Iraq once again were being patrolled by the Coalition in full force.

The June 25 bombing attack remains under investigation by the Saudi Arabian Government, assisted by large numbers of forensic experts from the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, which has responsibility within the U.S. Government for investigating terrorist attacks against Americans overseas. The Department of Defense (DOD) knows neither who the perpetrators of this attack are, nor who sponsored them.

#### WHY ARE WE IN THE PERSIAN GULF?

The attack on Khobar Towers has raised questions about the need for our presence in the Arabian Gulf Region, and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Our security interests in Saudi Arabia date back to 1945 when President Franklin Roosevelt met with King Abdul Aziz on his way home from the Yalta Conference. The United States has had a military presence in Saudi Arabia since the early 1950s. During most of this time, our presence has been well under 1,000 uniformed personnel and civilian employees, in addition to their families, engaged in training and advising the Saudi Arabian military. The United States Military Training Mission to Saudi Arabia (USMTM) was established in 1953 to assist the regular Saudi military under the Ministry of Defense and Aviation. In 1965 a U.S. Army program manager's office (OPM/SANG) was established to help in the modernization of the Saudi Arabian National Guard.

Our presence in helping the Saudis modernize their military and absorb new equipment was welcomed and unobtrusive. The Kingdom was a benign environment in which tens of thousands of American civilians lived and worked, particularly since the oil boom of the 1970s. Since 1977, our military assistance, including the salaries and expenses of our uniformed personnel and civilian employees, has been fully funded by the Saudi Arabian Government.

Saudi Arabia has never hosted foreign military bases of any nation. While Saudi Arabia and its Gulf neighbors generally welcomed an American military presence in the region after Great Britain ended its security responsibilities east of Suez in the early 1970s, they preferred that presence to be "over the horizon." For the United States, this presence was manifested primarily by our naval Middle East Force in the Arabian Gulf. While the United States made use of the Saudi air base at Dhahran in the early years of the Cold War, U.S. combatant forces were rarely deployed to the Kingdom. The major exception before the Gulf War was during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s when American AWACs and tanker aircraft were deployed to Riyadh.

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990, dramatically changed the security dynamics, and the U.S. presence, in the region. The United States, acting to protect its vital interests, led a coalition of Western and Islamic forces that deployed over half a million men and women to the Gulf to defend Saudi Arabia and the

smaller Gulf states and to free Kuwait from Iraq's brutal occupation. Through Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm they won an impressive victory, although the threats to the region from aggressor states were not completely destroyed.

The primary American interest that we acted decisively to protect in the Gulf War was access to the vast energy resources of the region, i.e., nearly two-third of the world's proven oil reserves upon which our own economy and those of the entire industrial world depend so heavily. This fact alone would have justified our actions in 1990-1991, but America also has other vital interests in the region. The security of Israel and Egypt and the Gulf states themselves was endangered by Iraq's aggression and desire to dominate the politics of the region. Coupled with the end of the Cold War, the Coalition victory allowed the United States to move forward on the Middle East peace process in a manner not previously possible. America also has vital interests in protecting U.S. citizens and property abroad, and in ensuring freedom of navigation through the air and sea lanes that connect Europe and the West with Africa, Asia, and the Indian Ocean, all of which pass through and alongside the Arabian Peninsula.

#### THE NATURE OF OUR CURRENT MISSION

When President Bush sought King Fahd's permission to deploy American forces to Saudi Arabia in 1990 for the build-up to Desert Shield/Desert Storm, he made a commitment that we would depart when our wartime mission was concluded. The United States sought no permanent bases or operational presence on the Arabian Peninsula, and that continues to be our policy.

However, the threat to U.S. vital interests in the region from Saddam Hussein's regime did not end with Desert Storm. While the Desert Storm coalition ejected the Iraqi army from Kuwait in 1991, the goal of the Coalition was not to dismember Iraq or advance to Baghdad to change the regime. Saddam Hussein has remained in power in Baghdad and continues to ignore or obstruct the U.N. Security Council resolutions that defined the terms of the cease-fire, particularly the requirement to disclose and destroy all weapons of mass destruction (WMD), nuclear, chemical, and biological, and their long-range means of delivery. Consequently, at the invitation of the Gulf countries, a coalition of forces, primarily from the United States, Great Britain and France, has remained in the region to enforce the U.N. Resolutions. These forces include the 4404th Air Wing, the unit that occupied the Khobar Towers facility.

In the years since the Gulf War, Saddam Hussein's regime has undertaken overt acts threatening peace in the region. In 1992, in response to Iraqi repression of the Shia, the Coalition created Operation Southern Watch. In 1993, the Iraqi regime plotted to assassinate former President George Bush during a visit to Kuwait. In response, the United States launched cruise missile strikes against the Iraqi intelligence headquarters. In 1994, the Iraqi regime again moved forces toward the Kuwaiti border with an intent to launch another invasion. U.S. forces responded with a rapid buildup, using host nation bases, including those in Saudi Arabia, and the Iraqis turned back. The U.N. subsequently passed UNSCR 949, which limits Iraq's right to deploy military forces in Southern Iraq—the area defined by the Coalition as south of 32 degrees North. In August 1996, Saddam Hussein, again in violation of U.N. resolutions, attacked without provocation the Kurdish city of Irbil. He then declared the two No Fly Zones, established in the terms of the cease-fire and after Saddam's repression of the Kurds, null and void. The United States and the United Kingdom extended the southern No Fly Zone to 33 degrees parallel and launched a series of missile attacks against Iraqi air defenses.

We have been able to respond to Iraq's continued provocations and threats to the peace and stability of its neighbors because the United States, together with its coalition partners, France and the United Kingdom, has maintained a strong military presence on the Arabian Peninsula, principally Saudi Arabia, since the end of Operation Desert Storm. Our forward presence not only allows us to respond quickly, but to monitor Iraq's compliance with U.N. Security Council resolutions, with respect to both repression of the Kurds and direct military threats to the Gulf states. This forward presence includes:

- Nearly 5,000 U.S. Air Force men and women in Operation Southern Watch who conduct combat air missions from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, enforcing the No Fly Zone over southern Iraq that restricts Saddam Hussein's ability to oppress his people and threaten the peace and stability of the region.
- U.S. servicemen and women who support the work of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) charged with discovering and destroying Saddam's programs to develop and produce weapons of mass destruction,



efforts which Iraq continues to oppose. This effort includes U-2 surveillance missions over Iraq to assist with UNSCOM's monitoring responsibilities.

- U.S. Army PATRIOT air defense batteries that have been deployed to protect our forces and major Saudi population centers at Dhahran and Riyadh since 1991 and regular rotations of battalion-sized armor units that exercise in Kuwait.

- The U.S. Navy Middle East Force that has been greatly expanded from a few surface combatant ships to include the presence of an Aircraft Carrier Battle Group and a Marine Amphibious Ready Group throughout most of the year.

- Robust military exercise programs with every Gulf state, unheard of before Desert Storm, that contribute to the operational readiness of all our military forces and help deter Iraq as well as Iran, which also has hegemonic ambitions coupled with a military modernization program that is out of all proportion to its defensive needs.

- Prepositioned equipment—a full brigade's worth in Kuwait, another two brigades' worth afloat, and we are building up to a fourth brigade's worth in Qatar. This equipment allows us to insert a substantial deterrent force onto the Arabian Peninsula in a fraction of the time that it took us in 1990.

Maintaining the U.S. military presence in the Arabian Gulf has not been easy for our uniformed personnel who have served repeated tours of duty in a harsh environment. It places a serious strain on ships, aircraft, and other equipment operating at high tempo. While the cost of our presence has been greatly eased through generous Host Nation Support contributions from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the other Gulf countries, the monetary cost to the United States remains high. But this residual cost and, the other sacrifices associated with our presence, are justified because they protect vital U.S. national interests at stake in the region.

Our experience clearly shows that an immediate and forceful response to Saddam Hussein's provocative actions has been effective in causing his regime to back off from threatening moves each time it has been foolish enough to try them. It is far more cost-effective to be in a position to deter Saddam Hussein than have to fight another war.

In addition, should deterrence fail, we are, without question, in a better position to defeat aggression than we were in the Summer of 1990, prior to Desert Shield. Then, it took more than 4 weeks to place meaningful combat power ashore. Today, we can do so in 4 to 5 days, using the combination of forward presence and measures that we have taken to improve our ability to deploy rapidly. We demonstrated this potential in October 1994 with great success, and we continue to exercise with the equipment for both training and deterrent purposes.

#### TERRORIST ATTACKS

The terrorist attacks on the OPM/SANG in Riyadh last November and on Khobar Towers in Dhahran last June were not only attacks on American citizens and forces, they were also an assault on our security strategy in the region. Our military presence in the region is opposed by Iran and Iraq, obviously, but also by home-grown dissidents in some countries of the region. The opposition includes extremist groups who are not only cold-blooded and fanatical, but also clever. They know that they cannot defeat us militarily, but they may believe they can defeat us politically; and they have chosen terror as the weapon to try to achieve this. They estimate that if they can cause enough casualties or threat of casualties to our forces, they can weaken support in the United States for our presence in the region, or weaken support in the host nations for a continued U.S. presence. They seek to drive a wedge between the U.S. security strategy in the Gulf and the American public, and between the United States and our regional allies.

Before the terrorist attacks, Saudi Arabia had long been seen as an oasis of calm and safety in the turbulent Middle East. Americans, both military and civilians alike, felt secure and generally welcome, albeit within a very different and restrictive culture compared to the United States or in Western Europe and elsewhere our forces were stationed overseas. Our approach to security matters in the Kingdom reflected this attitude, which was the reality until recent years. We lived and worked in urban environments and considered them on a par with Europe or Japan. While U.S. military security practices around the world were tightened following the Beirut bombings in 1983, we felt little danger in Saudi Arabia. Our presence in Saudi Arabia after the Gulf War had been requested and agreed to by the Saudi Government. Indeed, our presence contributed significantly to our host's defense.

The location of a large number of our personnel and our major combat air operations in the Dhahran region reflected this sense of well-being. The air facilities

were excellent and the Saudi Government provided good quality residences and office facilities in the nearby Khobar Towers complex. That complex had been built by the Saudi Government and was offered to the U.S. military for use during the Gulf War. It continued to be used by U.S. military personnel after Operation Southern Watch began.

The depth of feeling among strongly conservative Saudi elements that opposed inviting Western forces to the Kingdom in 1990 and remained opposed to our continued presence was slow to emerge clearly. There was evidence of anti-regime activity and a rise in anonymous threats against American interests, especially following the additional troop deployment in October 1994. Resentment over the costs of the Gulf War and the continued high costs of military modernization, and discontent over strains in the social fabric of the Kingdom, even from normally pro-Western Saudis, were recognized but not considered a threat to American military security. Since our personnel worked on Saudi military installations and lived in guarded compounds, any risks were seen as manageable by maintaining a low profile and following standard personal security practices. Force protection was actively pursued, but in the context of a stable and secure environment.

Following the November OPM/SANG bombing, that environment was re-evaluated, the threat level assessment was raised to "High" and extensive improvements were made in all our Arabian Gulf region facilities. In addition, we received a number of intelligence indications that new attacks were being contemplated against American forces and that Khobar Towers could be a target. What these indications lacked was warning of the specific kind of attack that occurred. However, they caused our commanders to put in place a wide variety of new security measures. At Khobar Towers alone, over 130 separate force protection enhancements were undertaken - barriers were raised and moved out, fences strengthened, entrances restricted, guard forces increased. The enhancements were aimed at a variety of potential threats, ranging from bombs to attempts to poison food and water supplies. The enhancements may well have saved hundreds of lives by preventing penetration by bombers into the center of the compound. The approach, however, was one of enhancing security of existing facilities despite their overall limitations, and this proved insufficient to protect our forces.

The climate of calm and safety in Saudi Arabia vanished with the November 1995 bombing of the OPM/SANG office in Riyadh and the highly sophisticated attack on Khobar Towers, which used a bomb now estimated at more than 20,000 pounds. It became clear that we needed to radically re-think the issue of force protection in the region, and that our conclusions from this effort would carry implications for the protection of our forces around the world.

#### RESPONSE TO THE KHOBAR TOWERS BOMBING: RELOCATE, RESTRUCTURE AND REFOCUS

Immediately following the Khobar Towers bombing attack, we undertook a fundamental re-evaluation of our force posture in the Arabian Gulf region. The guiding principles were: (1) We would continue to perform our missions; (2) Force protection would be a major consideration; and (3) Other tradeoffs could be made. Essentially, we looked at the mission tasks as if we were planning the operation from scratch within a very high threat environment. Consequently, we came to the conclusion that a far different force posture was appropriate. After extensive discussions with the senior Saudi leadership, I ordered a major realignment of our force posture in Saudi Arabia, an effort known as Operation Desert Focus. This new posture will greatly enhance force protection, while still permitting us to accomplish our missions. The effort, which is nearing completion, is two-pronged.

First, with the full cooperation and support of the Saudi Arabian Government, we began immediately to relocate our deployed air forces (the 4404th Air Wing) from the Saudi air bases located in urban concentrations at Riyadh and Dhahran to an isolated location at the uncompleted Prince Sultan Air Base near Al Kharj, where many Coalition forces were located during the Gulf War. While our personnel will be living in tents initially, we will be able to construct very effective defenses against terrorist attacks. This relocation effort, which will require over 1,400 truck loads to accomplish, is well underway. More than 500 tents, most of them air-conditioned, have been erected to house more than 4,000 troops and provide dining and recreation facilities, communications sites, and maintenance and operations facilities. The refueling tankers and reconnaissance aircraft from Riyadh were the first to arrive last month, and the move of the fighters and other aircraft from Dhahran is almost complete. More than 2,000 additional military personnel were deployed to Saudi Arabia temporarily to assist in this effort to provide security for the moves, erect facilities, and provide services at the base until permanent arrangements are in place. The Saudi Arabian Government has assumed responsibility for construct-

ing permanent facilities. The isolated location and large size of the Prince Sultan Air Base allows for extensive perimeters and avoids intense concentrations of troops.

Some of the units in Saudi Arabia cannot be relocated without degrading their effectiveness. Our USMTM and OPM/SANG security assistance personnel who train and advise the Saudi military must be in close proximity to their Saudi counterparts in the capital and at various bases. Our PATRIOT missile battery crews must be located near the urban areas and air bases that they defend. While these units must continue to work where they are now, we are taking steps to improve their security by consolidating them and moving them to more secure housing areas, providing more guards and barriers, and taking other steps to enhance their protection and lessen the impact of any future attacks.

Second, the Department has re-examined its personnel assignment policies for Saudi Arabia. While the majority of the operational forces with the 4404th Air Wing are on temporary duty and deploy on rotational assignments for up to 179 days at a time before returning to their home bases, many of the DOD personnel permanently assigned to Saudi Arabia with OPM/SANG and USMTM are on multi-year tours accompanied by their family members. At the time of the Khobar Towers bombing, we sponsored nearly 800 military dependents in Saudi Arabia alone. This no longer seems prudent.

At my request, the Department of State implemented an "authorized departure" of all U.S. Government dependents from Saudi Arabia in July 1996, which provides monetary entitlements to any families who wish to leave. In addition, DOD has withdrawn command sponsorship for dependents of most permanently assigned military members, which had the practical effect of an orderly, mandatory return. Nearly 300 dependents arrived by charter aircraft in Charleston, South Carolina, on August 18. While families are disrupted and some are undoubtedly displeased by this change in policy, I believe it was the correct choice. Military members understand personal risk and accept it by the nature of their profession. That is not true of their dependents, especially children, and we cannot allow them to remain in harm's way.

In the future, nearly all permanent assignments in Saudi Arabia will be 1-year unaccompanied tours. There are some assignments where the nature of the job requires longer tours for continuity and familiarization with the host government, and we have identified 59 billets that will be permitted to be accompanied by dependents. School-aged children will not be allowed under any circumstance under current conditions.

#### OTHER REGIONAL AND WORLDWIDE INITIATIVES

We also looked beyond Saudi Arabia, first to the other countries on the Arabian Peninsula where we have DOD personnel, both combatants and noncombatants alike. In Kuwait, we will move exposed Air Force personnel onto the Ali Al Salem Air Base where they will live temporarily in tents, as at Prince Sultan Air Base at Al Kharj in Saudi Arabia. In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), we have completed moving our Air Force personnel from an urban hotel onto a UAE air base where they will also live in temporary facilities. In both cases we have received strong support from the host countries.

The situation in each country in the Gulf is different in terms of dependent numbers, threat, and security exposure. We decided to reduce the number of family members in Kuwait through a program of accelerated attrition. In the future, there will be only about 30 billets designated for accompanied tours. In Bahrain we are looking at reducing our numbers through gradual attrition matching the normal rotation cycles of personnel. We have decided to leave the dependent status as is in the UAE, Qatar, Oman, and Yemen, affecting approximately 65 family members.

After the Khobar Towers bombing, I also undertook a process to examine more closely the adequacy of our force protection measures for our troops around the world. On July 17 I sent a message directing all Commanders-in-Chief (CINCS) to look at force protection in their areas of responsibility and report back to me by August 1 on how best to deal with the rapidly escalating threat to U.S. forces. I urged them to be innovative in their approaches to dealing with the terrorist problem. As a minimum, I asked that they answer the following questions:

- Should our troops remain in all present locations?
- Should they be moved from urban areas?
- Is an adjustment required in dependent status?
- How much should force protection interfere with the mission?
- Is intelligence focused to deal with the terrorist threat?
- How can we work more effectively with host nations on force protection measures?



I have incorporated many of the recommendations and ideas from the CINCs in the force protection initiative the Department is undertaking. Each of the CINCs responded personally with detailed suggestions of additional force protection improvements that could be undertaken without compromising the mission. The CINCs suggestions fell into the following key categories:

- Establish location of forces as a critical factor in force protection considerations. Cross check with dependent security assessment.
- Tailor anti-terrorism training to increase situational awareness of deploying personnel.
- Provide more focused anti-terrorism intelligence to field units.
- Improve interchange with host nations on intelligence and security matters.

I have incorporated many of the recommendations and ideas in the force protection initiative the Department is undertaking. Terrorists will always search out and strike at the weakest link in our chain of defenses. Our goal is to find and strengthen those weak spots and we are doing just that.

#### FORCE PROTECTION VS. MISSION

The relocation of our forces in Saudi Arabia and the change in personnel assignment policies are just two examples of the need to rethink fundamentally our approach to force protection around the world. Prior to the Khobar Towers bombing, our force protection measures focused on incremental fixes to existing arrangements, rather than consideration of radical changes in force posture. Incremental fixes in force protection can always be trumped by attacks of greater magnitude.

To stay ahead of the threat, we now see that we must always put force protection up front as a major consideration with key other mission goals as we plan operations, and that that parity must be maintained throughout the operation. Changes in threat level must trigger fundamental reconsiderations of force protection and cause commanders to reexamine this issue as if they were designing a new mission. Moreover, commanders must be empowered to do this.

The task of protecting our forces would be easy if we were willing to abandon or compromise our missions, but that is not an option. We have global interests and global responsibilities. Those require our forces to be deployed overseas to protect our national security interests. Our troops cannot successfully complete their tasks if they are required to live in bunkers 24 hours a day.

How then can we accomplish our missions without compromising their success or abandoning them altogether? The answer is that we will require tradeoffs in other areas, such as cost, convenience, and quality of life. This is a tough answer for our men and women in uniform who will live in less comfortable surroundings and spend more time avoiding and defending against terrorism, and it is a tough answer for them and their families, who must experience the loneliness of unaccompanied tours. We will have to compensate for these changes and greater hardships in order to continue to maintain the superb quality force we have today.

Putting force protection up front as a major consideration along with other mission objectives around the world will require a fundamental change in the mind-set with which we plan and carry out operations. It also requires structural changes in the Department. Many of the initial actions we are taking are directed only in part at the Southwest Asia theater. They all have global implications.

#### COMMISSIONING OF DOWNING ASSESSMENT

On June 28, 3 days after the Khobar Towers bombing, I issued a charter for an assessment of the facts and circumstances surrounding the tragedy and appointed General Wayne A. Downing, United States Army (Retired), to head the assessment effort. I asked General Downing to give me a fast, unvarnished and independent look at what happened there and offer ideas on how we can try to prevent such a tragedy in the future. The final report was delivered to me on August 30.

General Downing has given me that unvarnished and independent review of the Khobar Towers bombing and a tough critique of past practices and attitudes. His report confirms my belief that we must make a fundamental change in our mind-set. On the whole, I accept General Downing's recommendations and I believe we can take effective action to deal with each of the problems identified in his comprehensive report. His conclusions have by and large validated the initiatives we have already launched, and many of his recommendations already have been implemented through the changes we have made. Where his recommendations have identified additional changes that should be considered, we have a process underway either to implement them or to put them on a fast track to decision. General Downing's report is an important contribution to changing our entire approach to

force protection and provides evidence of the need for changes in the way we do business.

Annex (B) contains a detailed response to each recommendation included in the Downing report. We have taken the following actions in response to the principal recommendations regarding force protection in the report.

- **Issue DOD-wide standards for providing force protection**

DOD has maintained a variety of directives and standards related to force protection. These documents have been of great use to organizations and have served us well. However, as General Downing has indicated, the diversity of these documents, and their "advisory" rather than "directive" nature, may have caused confusion. In my judgment, this is largely a result of the continuing transition the Department is making under Goldwater-Nichols to joint operations under combatant commands.

To correct this situation, I have revised and am reissuing this day DOD Directive 2000.12, "DOD Combating Terrorism Program." This new directive requires that the approaches previously set forth as suggestions in DOD Handbook O-2000.12-H be implemented as the DOD standard. In applying this standard, commanders and managers must take account of the mission, the threat, and specific circumstances. The new directive also implements other new initiatives I have identified elsewhere in this report.

- **Give local commanders operational control with regard to force protection matters.**

Under the traditional peacetime command and control arrangements, force protection is the responsibility of the CINC, through the service component commanders, to the local commanders in the field. In the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), whose area of responsibility includes Saudi Arabia, the service component commanders exercised *operational control* of deployed forces from their headquarters, including for force protection. But the Commander, Joint Task Force Southwest Asia (CJTF-SWA) exercised *tactical control* over forces in theater that are operating specific missions in support of Operation Southern Watch. Thus force protection responsibilities and tactical control were not in the same hands.

Following the attack on OPM/SANG in Riyadh last November, the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Central Command (CINCCENT) gave additional responsibilities to the Commander, JTF-SWA, for *coordination* of force protection in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Following the subsequent attack on Khobar Towers in June, CINCCENT has directed the Commander, CJTF-SWA, to assume *full responsibility* for force protection of all combatant forces deployed in support of Operation Southern Watch. With respect to force protection, CJTF-SWA now has authority and responsibility to establish policy, and directive authority to implement and enforce the CINCCENT force protection policies and directives. Tactical control and force protection are now in the same hands. Service component commanders continue to maintain operational control of combatant forces deployed in support of JTF-SWA. CINCCENT will also investigate the feasibility and advisability of establishing a CENTCOM forward headquarters that could assure force protection responsibilities for all forces on the Arabian Peninsula. I have also directed all CINCs to review and make recommendations on similar command structure changes for force protection in their areas of responsibility.

The DOD directive I have issued establishing DOD-wide standards for providing force protection now requires that each CINC review the command arrangements for every Joint Task Force when it is established and periodically thereafter with regard to force protection responsibilities. The directive also requires that the CINCs report to me any decisions to vest operational control for force protection matters outside a Joint Task Force Commander and to detail the reasons why this decision has been made.

- **Designate the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the principal advisor and the single DOD-wide focal point for force protection activities.**

General Downing's report correctly recognizes the need for a stronger centralized approach to force protection within DOD. There indeed should be a single individual designated as responsible for ensuring that our policies will result in adequate force protection measures being taken and for auditing the performance of our units.

Because force protection measures must be carried out by our uniformed military organizations, I have therefore designated the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the principal advisor and the single DOD-wide focal point for force protection activities. He will review and coordinate these activities in the context of broader national security policy matters with the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. The Chairman will establish an appropriate force protection element within the Joint Staff to perform this function.



As the primary, high-level advocate for force protection, the Chairman will help ensure that this requirement is placed as a major consideration along with other mission goals as we plan military operations, and that focus on force protection is maintained throughout the operation. The Chairman will also ensure that adequate force protection is a top priority for every commander at every level within our military organization, and that commanders will be empowered to ensure that force protection measures respond to the unique situation on the ground. As the key military advisor to the President and the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman can also ensure that force protection receives a high priority in budgetary allocations. As the representative of the joint forces, the Chairman is also in the position to ensure a joint and uniform approach to force protection throughout the Service components.

The instructions carrying out this recommendation are included in DOD Directive 2000.12 being issued today.

• **Move force protection responsibilities from the Department of State to the Department of Defense where possible.**

In some cases, the Department of State, rather than the Department of Defense, is responsible for the security of military forces overseas, including force protection. This division of responsibilities can result in different standards of force protection, as highlighted by the bombing of the OPM/SANG in Riyadh, in November 1995.

Immediately following that event, I directed that the Chairman create a DOD Anti-Terrorism Task Force to assess DOD anti-terrorism worldwide and to provide a report with recommendations to improve anti-terrorism readiness. The Task Force highlighted the bifurcated responsibilities for security of DOD personnel. In particular, combatant forces were under the authority of the CINCCENT, but U.S. military personnel assigned to OPM/SANG and USMTM were under the control of the U.S. Ambassador for security matters. The final report and recommendations, completed just days before the bombing of Khobar Towers, called for a clarification of the division of responsibilities, including consideration of changes to the President's Letter to Chiefs of Mission.

Because the Department of State was responsible for security at OPM/SANG, the Secretary of State, in accordance with the law, created an Accountability Review Board to review the security procedures in effect at the time of the bombing. The Board's report also highlighted the bifurcation of responsibilities and noted it caused a confusion and a lack of clear guidance as to security responsibilities.

In light of that report, and the subsequent attack on Khobar Towers (a facility under the security cognizance of the regional CINC) DOD has, working closely with the Department of State, undertaken to realign security responsibilities on the Saudi Arabian Peninsula.

The Secretary of State and I have agreed that he should delegate force protection responsibility and authority to me for all DOD activities within the Arabian Peninsula that are not already assigned to, or otherwise under the command of, the CINCCENT. I will, in turn, delegate this responsibility to the CINCCENT. The only DOD elements that will remain under the security responsibility of the Chief of Mission will be the integral elements of the country team (i.e. the Defense Attaché Office, the USMC Security Detachment, and the Security Assistance Offices that are located within or in close proximity to their respective U.S. Embassies, in Qatar, the UAE, Bahrain and Oman), those sensitive intelligence and counterintelligence activities that are conducted under the direction and control of the Chief of Mission/Chief of Station, and any DOD personnel detailed to other U.S. Government agencies or departments.

As force protection and anti-terrorism requirements are addressed in more detail by the other regional CINCS, similar realignments of force protection responsibility may need to be worked out with the Secretary of State.

This arrangement balances the requirement for protecting DOD forces with the overall mission of the U.S. Government overseas. The Ambassador must be in charge of all activities that have a direct impact on the conduct of our nation's foreign policy. However, in those high threat instances where the number of DOD forces in country assigned to the embassy exceeds the country team's ability to provide for their security, the regional CINC will be charged with ensuring their safety from terrorist attack.

• **Improve the use of available intelligence and intelligence collection capabilities.**

Passive protective measures are always important, but the real key to better, more effective force protection against terrorism is to take active measures against the terrorists. This brings me to another major action we are taking in Saudi Arabia—improving our intelligence capabilities. We do not want to simply sit and wait for terrorists to act. We want to seek them out, find them, identify them, and do



what we can to disrupt or preempt any planned operation. The key to this is better intelligence.

In Saudi Arabia, the U.S. intelligence community was providing 24-hour a day coverage of terrorist and terrorist related activity. All of the available intelligence was widely distributed in theater. This intelligence support for force protection was very good in some areas, sufficient in others, and lacking in at least one key area—that of providing tactical warning of impending attack.

There was a strong relationship between intelligence threat reporting and the theater security posture. The physical and personnel security enhancements that were in place at the time of the bombing were based on vulnerability analysis that came from general intelligence threat reporting. The linkage between intelligence reporting and the operational commander's action is critically important whether it involves intelligence threat information feeding physical security improvements or supporting target selection for precision weapons. In the case of the threat to U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia, the available intelligence clearly formed the basis for security planning and procedures. Intelligence reports drove the extensive security enhancements that were completed prior to the attack. We must not lose sight of the fact that U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia acted on the general threat intelligence available prior to the bombing and that information *saved lives and injuries*. We had intelligence and we acted on it, but we lacked the specificity necessary that would have made the critical difference in this incident. What was missing was the hard tactical warning of impending attack—the information we needed to thwart the operation before it reached fruition.

There is no doubt that we can always have better and more precise intelligence and we are continuously striving for that level of detail. I am reviewing the Department's ability to meet this long-term requirement and I have the active assistance of the Director of Central Intelligence in reviewing intelligence policies and capabilities to acquire better tactical threat information from all intelligence assets.

I am also taking steps to address General Downing's specific recommendations that we look at both how we make intelligence available and how we use it at small unit levels. I will work with CENTCOM and the Military Departments to implement those recommendations.

The goal is not only to have better intelligence collection, but to be better able to use it. We need to sort out the real and useful intelligence from the misinformation and disinformation that is also collected. One key to improved analysis at the Washington level is the Counter Terrorist Center, which is now receiving higher priority in the face of the higher threat. But even with improved analysis in Washington, we still have to make this intelligence available in a timely way to the forces threatened, and to combine national intelligence with the local intelligence being collected. Among the steps we are taking to improve intelligence in the Gulf region is augmentation of the Southern Watch fusion cell with counter-terrorism analysts. We developed the model for intelligence fusion cells in Bosnia. We are replicating this model now not only in the Gulf region, but around the world wherever our forces are deployed. A fusion cell combines, in a timely way, national strategic intelligence, which we gather around the world, with local or tactical intelligence. That allows us to quickly "fuse" together the global picture and the regional picture to help us see patterns, keep information from falling through the cracks, and to focus U.S. and our allies' intelligence services on the same pieces of information at the same time. Equally important, it emphasizes the timely delivery of useful information to the tactical commander. We also are leveraging technology to build the tools we need to manage information better over the long term.

General Downing rightly identified that we must commit ourselves to sustained in-depth, long-term analysis of trends, intentions, and capabilities of terrorists. This is a systemic issue, not just in terrorism analysis, that we must address across the board in our intelligence analysis and reporting. In recognition of this systemic problem, the Department developed an initiative earlier this year for the intelligence community that will make a career-long investment in selective intelligence analysis to provide the skills and expertise the community needs to sustain proficiency against hard target problems.

• **Establish a workable division of responsibilities on force protection matters between the United States and host nations.**

General Downing correctly identified close and cooperative relationships with the host government as a key component of successful force protection programs in peacetime environments overseas. Without strong working relationships at all levels between U.S. and host nation officials, many force protection measures cannot be implemented.

Formal, structured relationships have their place and should be established where appropriate and possible. It is most important that those U.S. officials with responsibility for force protection, including all commanders responsible for activities in the field, work consciously to build personal relationships of trust and confidence with their foreign counterparts.

The Department is examining its personnel policies and practices to ensure that they support this important objective. For example, we are increasing tour length for additional key U.S. personnel in Saudi Arabia, including the commanders of the USAF Office of Special Investigations and Security Police allowing them to form deeper relationships with their counterparts.

**• Raise the funding level and priority for force protection and get the latest technology into the field and into the Department of Defense.**

Since force protection is an integral part of every military mission, the costs are dispersed among the various mission expenditures such as training, equipment, and operations and maintenance. As a consequence, force protection expenditures traditionally are not isolated and treated as separate budget items. Moreover, when we are faced with unique force protection requirements, we fund them on an ad hoc basis. For example, on August 9, after the Khobar Towers attack, Deputy Secretary White invoked the Food and Forage authority to pay for moving our forces in Saudi Arabia and improving security. On August 23, I requested additional funding for fiscal year 1996 and fiscal year 1997 force protection and anti-terrorism requirements in Saudi Arabia and around the world.

However, with force protection now given a higher overall mission priority, we need to ensure force protection also is given a higher overall budget priority in the allocation of defense resources. To do so, we must be able to collect, consolidate and track our disparate expenditures for force protection, and measure our total expenditures against the requirements.

I have initiated a comprehensive review of future funding for force protection and I have designated force protection as a major issue for the fiscal years 1998–2003 program review. All DOD components are scrubbing the latest budget estimates to ensure that no key projects related to force protection and anti-terrorism were omitted. Based on the responses received, the Program Review Group will assemble options to augment spending for force protection activities in the defense program. The Defense Resources Board is scheduled to review the proposals and make decision recommendations to me in October.

Based on these budget reviews, the standard procedures for preparation of the program budget will be amended to facilitate the review of force protection requirements in future budgets. First, the existing procedures will be used to emphasize the high priority I am placing on force protection and counter terrorism. The Joint Requirements Oversight Council will continue to evaluate force protection and provide recommendations to me. I will ask the CINCs to include force protection programs in the Integrated Priority Lists they submit to me. This process will insure that specific programs or program areas highlighted by the CINCs will be included in the Program Objective Memoranda prepared by the Services for the next defense program (fiscal years 1999–2003). To enhance further this process, detailed program and budget displays will be required for all force protection and anti-terrorism programs to track funding patterns and to provide a solid basis for reviewing proposed force protection enhancements.

I have designated the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology as responsible for anti-terrorism technology development and asked him to expedite the adoption of new advanced technologies to meet force protection needs. This effort includes working with our allies, especially Israel and Great Britain, who have extensive experience in countering terrorism.

**• Determine culpability of individuals responsible for force protection matters in the chain of command.**

On August 30, 1996, without prior review, I transmitted the Downing report to the Secretary of the Air Force for evaluation and appropriate action. Specifically, the Air Force was asked to examine issues raised in the report concerning how the Air Force organizes, trains, and equips in order to support forces deployed to combatant commands. Additionally, I deferred to Secretary Widnall on any issues regarding the adequacy of individual acts or omissions.

In turn, the Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff designated the Commander, 12th Air Force, as the disciplinary review authority and General Court-Martial Convening Authority regarding any actions or omissions by Air Force personnel associated with the Khobar Towers bombing. He is charged with reporting findings and recommendations to the Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff within 90 days.

Additionally, the Air Force is pursuing a top-to-bottom review of force protection policies that include procedures for physical security, training and equipment available for security police, intelligence support and personnel practices.

As we look at questions of accountability we also need to concentrate on learning lessons for the future. The U.S. military has a long, and admirable, record of self-examination and correction. That process must not be sacrificed. Nor must we lose sight of the fact that the bombing at Khobar Towers was not an accident. It was a heinous act of murder committed by persons as yet unknown.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

We live in an era of great hope. Our hopes are nurtured by the emergence of democracies around the globe, by the growth of global trade relationships and by expansion of global communications.

Terrorism hangs over this bright future like a dark cloud, threatening our hope for a future of freedom, democracy and cooperation among all nations. It is the antithesis of everything America stands for. It is an enemy of the fundamental principles of human rights—freedom of movement, freedom of expression and freedom of religion. Perpetrators and sponsors of terrorist acts reject the rule of law and basic human decency. They seek to impose their will on others through acts of violence. Terrorism is a tool of states, a vehicle of expression for organizations and even a way of life for individuals. We can expect the terrorists to continue to seek out vulnerabilities and attack. Terrorists normally prey on the weak, but even militaries have vulnerabilities and present targets with high publicity value.

America has global interests and responsibilities. Our national security strategy for protecting those interests and carrying out those interests requires deployment of our forces to the far reaches of the globe. When terrorists aim their attacks at U.S. military forces overseas, they are attacking our ability to protect and defend our vital interests in the world. Our military presence in many areas provides the crucial underpinning that has made progress towards democracy and economic growth possible. We have the ability to project power far from our borders and influence events on a scale unmatched by any other country or organization. But as General Downing points out in his report, terrorism provides less capable nations, or even organizations, the means to project a particularly insidious form of power, even across borders, and contest U.S. influence.

But terrorists cannot win unless we let them. Sacrificing our strategic interests in response to terrorist acts is an unacceptable alternative. We cannot be a great power and live in a risk-free world. Therefore we must gird ourselves for a relentless struggle in which there will be many silent victories and some noisy defeats. There will be future terrorist acts attempted against U.S. military forces. Some will have tragic consequences. No force protection approach can be perfect, but the responsibility of leaders is to use our nation's resources, skills, and creativity to minimize them. We must learn from the Khobar Towers tragedy, taking advantage of the U.S. military's tradition of strengthening itself out of adversity. The actions outlined in this report, the lessons articulated by General Downing and the ideas we have garnered from our military commanders around the world, will strengthen our defenses.

#### ANNEXES

- (A) Downing Investigation Report
- (B) Point-by-Point Response to the Downing Report
- (C) Defense special Weapons Agency (DSWA) Report of Khobar Towers Bomb Damage
- (D) Memorandum, Assigning CJCS Responsibility for Force Protection
- (E) DOD Directive 2000.12, "DOD Combatting Terrorism Program"
- (F) Letters of Referral to USAF
- (G) Memorandum of Understanding Between the Department of Defense and Department of State

[Annexes A-G are retained in committee files.]

Chairman THURMOND. Thank you, Dr. Perry. General Shali, would you care to make a statement?



**STATEMENT OF GEN. JOHN M. SHALIKASHVILI, USA,  
CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF**

General SHALIKASHVILI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

Before I elaborate on some of the major initiatives that we have undertaken following the terrorist attack on Khobar Towers, I, too, would like again to express my deep condolences to the families of those 24 servicemen and women who lost their lives to terrorism in the last 10 months in Saudi Arabia. I would also like briefly to reflect on the magnitude and the complexity of the mission of Central Command, as well as the dedication, professionalism and heroism of the men and women of that command.

Since 1992, CENTCOM has flawlessly executed many diverse missions, of course, the most widely known of which is Operation Southern Watch, the enforcement of the no-fly zone over Southern Iraq. This mission alone requires on the average over 2,300 air sorties per month, but this was only the beginning.

Within the last 2 years, CENTCOM also conducted continuous maritime intercept operations as well as five major contingency operations, and most recently the air strikes in the southern no-fly zone. All of this was accomplished over lines of communication stretching more than 12,000 sea miles between the United States and the Gulf.

But CENTCOM has not just been busy, they have been highly effective at getting the job done as well, first ejecting Saddam Hussein from Kuwait and then deterring further attacks against our allies and the region's oil supply and enforcing U.N. Security Council resolutions, thus protecting America's vital interests. Until recently CENTCOM's demanding military operations could safely be its primary focus.

But as Secretary Perry mentioned, in November of 1995, when a bomb exploded near a U.S. security assistance facility in Riyadh, this focus had to be broadened, for terrorism in Saudi Arabia had become a high priority security issue. In the Gulf our forces did, in fact, aggressively begin to improve their security posture against terrorism.

In Saudi Arabia, force protection improvements were extensive. In the half-year after the November bombing, CENTCOM personnel conducted security reviews at nearly every installation in the region.

At Khobar towers alone, CENTCOM personnel completed more than 130 antiterrorist improvements. Indeed, some of those measures, as Secretary Perry alluded, varying of sentries, roving patrols, extremely effective entry procedures, kept the terrorists from penetrating the compound and thus undoubtedly saved hundreds of lives, preventing an even greater tragedy.

After the attack at Khobar Towers, more lives were saved by the sentries who risked their lives to alert the occupants, by the buddy system teams who tended to each other before themselves, by the physicians and medical technicians who were flown in within hours, and by the dedicated people all along the evacuation route through Europe to the United States.

Also, do not forget, CENTCOM's Joint Task Force Southwest Asia was back flying again, doing its mission within 48 hours after it had been attacked.

This command is now operating in a radically different environment. After the bombing at Khobar Towers, it was clear that terrorism, and especially terrorism in the Persian Gulf region, had reached a new level of destructiveness and sophistication. To meet this challenge requires that we change the way we go about the business of force protection, so let me highlight some major areas that are elaborated on in the Secretary's report to help us meet this new challenge.

Let me begin with unity of effort. Secretary Perry said he has directed that I, as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, assume the duties as the Department's focal point for all force protection matters.

In turn, I am establishing a permanent office within the Joint Chiefs of Staff under the direct supervision of a general officer to deal with all matters of combatting terrorism. I will also draw on the Joint Requirements Oversight Council, JROC, existing combat support agencies, and others, in and out of Government, to help in this effort.

Among its many tasks, this new office will help me assist field commanders to ensure that force protection considerations are included in every aspect of our activities worldwide. To do this, we will focus on force protection doctrine, standards, training and requirements, as well as force protection programs and levels of funding. We will pursue innovative technologies, and work closely with our allies who face many of the same threats that we do.

To ensure better coordination overseas, and in agreement with the Secretary of State, CINCCENT has been given force protection responsibility and authority for all Department of Defense activities on the Arabian peninsula, other than those that are an integral element of the U.S. Ambassador's country team.

Just yesterday, when I met with our unified commanders, I asked them to advise me whether this agreement might not also be a prototype for the force protection arrangements in their regions as well.

Along with improving our unity of effort, command and control is a critical consideration in the organization of every joint task force. As an immediate step, we have given the commander of the joint task force in Southwest Asia the specific authority and responsibility for force protection for all combatant units in the region operating in support of Operation Southern Watch. As a further step, we are investigating the feasibility and advisability of establishing a Central Command forward headquarters that then could assume force protection responsibility for all forces in the Arabian peninsula.

To achieve key leader stability and reduce personnel and unit turbulence, we have lengthened the tours of senior leaders, and we are extending the tours of other individuals as well as units. To strengthen our posture further, we require viable force protection standards, sound force protection doctrine, and appropriate force protection training.

While we did have advisory force protection standards, we have now issued them as a directive, and we will be further refining these standards to ensure that they fully address the new terrorist threat.

Let me give you some examples of the current efforts to improve doctrine development and training. First, we will be reviewing our extensive joint and service doctrine publications to ensure that they address the new threat, and that we have common guidance, procedures, and standards at all levels of command.

Second, we will also review our force protection training to ensure that our schools and training centers teach the right material, and that we have force protection training requirements that are tailored to the specific needs of each regional commander.

Third, we have learned a great deal about specialized predeployment training from our efforts last year to prepare our forces for deployment to Bosnia. Drawing on that experience, the U.S. Atlantic Command, in conjunction with the other services and unified commands, has developed a draft antiterrorism training plan to ensure that we provide theater-specific training to individuals and units before they deploy to a theater.

Finally, I have directed the National Defense University to review the status of antiterrorism instruction in our professional military education system to include risk management training for our leaders.

The last area I would like to address is intelligence. Despite our best efforts, improvements in tactical intelligence are certainly warranted. Our intelligence goal must be to preempt and disrupt terrorist cells before they can plan and carry out acts of terrorism against our forces. Thus, the collection, analysis and timely and predictive tactical intelligence on the plans, methods, and intentions of terrorists is of utmost importance.

This requires the use of all types of intelligence assets, including technical intelligence and human intelligence to accomplish all-source intelligence analysis on antiterrorism matters.

We have already increased the number of analysts who are working in antiterrorism cells at every level, from the Pentagon down to the joint task force. Our primary concern today is to make sure we have enough analysts who are properly trained in terrorism-related issues assigned to these critical analytical positions.

At the user level, we must continue to ensure that the intelligence we acquire of our terrorists can be sanitized and then quickly passed to the lowest classification level possible, to the individuals who must act on it to protect our men and women.

Overall, we must take action to increase the emphasis on terrorist-related intelligence, and improve intelligence-sharing with host nations. The Department and the DCI are working in unison to determine what further improvements must be implemented.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, we will neither be deterred from pursuing our interests, nor will we be prevented from protecting our forces. While future terrorist acts are certain, just as certain must be our resolve to protect the lives of our men and women in uniform and Americans everywhere from terrorist attacks. To assure that this happens, we are moving out with dispatch on these



and other initiatives outlined in Secretary Perry's force protection report.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND. General Downing.

**STATEMENT OF GEN. WAYNE A. DOWNING, USA (RET.),  
DIRECTOR, DOWNING ASSESSMENT TASK FORCE**

General DOWNING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

Our charter was given to us by the Secretary of Defense; it directed the task force to assess the extent to which the casualties and damage sustained at Khobar Towers were the result of inadequate security policies, infrastructures, or systems.

Dr. Perry also asked the team to recommend to him measures that could minimize casualties and damage from such attacks in the future.

Within 24 hours of receiving this charter, we began to form a task force composed of officers, noncommissioned officers, DOD civilians, and retirees from the Army, the Marine Corps, the Navy, and the Air Force, located throughout the United States. The task force also included representatives of the Department of State, the Department of Energy, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

We interviewed over 400 individuals, and this included everyone from General Peay, the commander-in-chief of Central Command, to the sentries on top of the roof of Building 131 at Khobar Towers.

We analyzed literally hundreds of documents, and I must report to you that we received full cooperation from not only the Defense Department but also all Federal agencies, the Saudis, the Governments of Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates in Egypt, as well as our allies and friends, the British, the French, the Israelis, and the Jordanians.

All recognized the importance of the task force mission to the future security of U.S. forces deployed overseas, and all fully supported our efforts to find more effective ways to deal with terrorism.

Ladies and gentlemen, terrorism represents an undeclared war against the United States. The military forces of this country are clearly superior to all others in the world, and this margin of superiority grows with every day. Convinced of the futility of challenging our forces directly, or challenging them head-on, some enemies are attempting to wage war against us asymmetrically.

Some of these enemies feel that our greatest vulnerability is in American intolerance to casualties. If we prove ourselves incapable of responding to terrorism, then terrorists will continue to represent a significant threat to us. They will continue to attack us, especially our servicemen and servicewomen stationed overseas.

The Secretary's report to the President in our estimation adequately addresses the main findings and recommendations of the task force. Perhaps the most important points are the institutionalizations on some of the things that are going to be needed to make this effort continue in the future, and that is the key to this, because the devil is in the details.

How will this be enacted? What will the follow-through be to ensure 6-months from now, a year from now, 5 years from now, that

we actually implement those actions that are needed, because if we have a successful antiterrorism program, nothing is going to happen. We are going to be successful, and when nothing happens, that is when we can get lulled into a false sense of security.

Since Secretary Perry and General Shalikashvili have discussed the majority of our major findings and recommendations, let me just highlight a few. The first is unity of command.

In order to have a unified approach to force protection, one man must be in charge in the Gulf region. Goldwater-Nichols assigned great power to the unified combatant commanders. I believe the law's intent was to strengthen joint operational command, while allowing the services the mission of training, equipping, and sustaining the force.

Force protection is an operational issue. It is a commander's business. It always has been and it always will be. There are training and equipping pieces to it, but ultimately it is an inherent function of command.

Placing two of the service components, Air Forces Central Command and Army Forces Central Command, in charge from a distance of 7,000 miles away in the United States satisfies the letter of Goldwater-Nichols, as the Secretary said, but it does not satisfy the spirit of the law, and while a commander-in-chief under Goldwater-Nichols may delegate operational control of his forces in theater to service components, doing so dilutes the principle of the unity of command, and it circumvents the real intent of Goldwater-Nichols, which was to put the joint commander clearly in charge of operational matters.

Now, as the Secretary's report states, and as the chairman has just told you, establishing a CENTCOM forward headquarters is one example of how such unity of command could be achieved, and we believe it is important that we do not extend these lines of command back to the United States, and that operational control of all forces operating in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf are exercised by one man, one forward-deployed headquarters.

Our units overseas must have the resources to do the job, especially when conditions change. It is a new world out there. Missions start, you think they are only going to be going on for 90 or 180 days, and they go on for months and then years.

When short-term missions become semi-permanent, we have got to reevaluate what is going on, and we are doing that. When additional missions are added, when the missions advance, we need to also look at our structure to make sure we have got the right people out there and the right skills.

When a major new element is introduced, like a terrorist threat, we again must reevaluate our force structure to make sure we have got the right people there, and the manning policies of the services must support continuity and cohesion of our units overseas.

Now, we stated very strongly in the report that intelligence did provide warning of the terrorist threat to U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia. As a result of that warning, those responsible for force protection had time and motivation to reduce vulnerabilities. However, as has already been stated, it was not enough. Tactical details were needed, and those tactical details could only have been provided by human intelligence.

The Long Commission investigating the 1983 Beirut bombing found that our human intelligence capability and counterintelligence capabilities had eroded, and Admiral Long recommended that we take immediate action to address these significant shortfalls.

Today, we still have enormous difficulty in gaining first-hand, inside knowledge of terrorist plans and activities. The Department of Defense must invest more time, people, and funds to develop human intelligence and counterintelligence in threatened areas if we are going to be able to thwart further attacks.

The Director of Central Intelligence has assured me that he will carefully examine the perceptions of this task force that there exists restrictions on the recruitment of sources, and these currently hamper the efforts of our national intelligence agencies.

The task force found a manpower-intensive approach to force protection used in the gulf. We saw sentries with only their personal weapons and binoculars standing 12-hour shifts in 120-degree-plus heat. We saw bomb dogs used to detect explosives in vehicles who had an effectiveness span of about 15 to 30 minutes in those kind of environmental conditions. We saw crude highway traffic control barriers like you see out on 395 to route traffic when you are doing construction being used as the primary means of protection from blasts.

Ladies and gentlemen, American technology is the best in the world. We can and must provide our forces with state-of-the-art sensors, blast protectors, automated entry points, and cargo inspection devices. We also need teams to assist our commanders in applying this technology.

We have enough inspectors. We have got enough people going over and telling these commanders what is wrong in the field. What we need now are people to help them, to point out deficiencies, and then stay there and work with them and correct those deficiencies, and one of the ways they can do this is by going over and installing some of this very modern and sophisticated equipment that is available right now commercially in markets here around the United States.

We believe that the Department of Defense estimate of a 20,000-pound bomb is inaccurate. Our estimates approximate the bomb size to be 3,000 to 8,000 pounds, most likely about 5,000 pounds.

Now, why is this important? A 20,000-pound bomb might be seen as indefensible, an excuse for not taking appropriate countermeasures, and that is wrong. More importantly, our proceedings for estimating bomb size must be refined and accurate. If we are to use these estimates in this approach to estimation in order to design structures and devices to protect our forces in the future, we have got to know what the size of these weapons are.

In any event, the task force found that even a 220-pound bomb, the size used in the November 1995 bombing in Riyadh, if that size package had been detonated 80 feet from Building 131, we would have still had significant loss of life and casualties.

Finally, I also would like to offer my personal sympathy and condolences to the families of those brave Americans who were killed on June 25 at Khobar Towers. I want to tell you that the loss of your loved ones was our motivation to make this assessment as



thorough and as objective as possible, and it is our most sincere desire that the recommendations that we have made will help prevent such tragedies in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of General Downing follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT BY GEN. WAYNE A. DOWNING

##### INTRODUCTION

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, for this opportunity to discuss a grave danger to our security. In recent weeks, terrorism has dominated the news and caused concern for all Americans. It is my hope that the submission of our assessment to the Secretary of Defense has contributed to the U.S. ability to prevent or minimize the damage of future terrorist attacks.

I was asked, because of my background, to conduct an assessment of the bombing at Khobar Towers, in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. I would like to take this opportunity to thank publicly both the President and the Secretary of Defense for their confidence in appointing me to head the assessment team and for the outstanding support and the freedom of action we enjoyed in conducting the assessment.

To the families of those brave airmen who lost their lives June 25th, 1996, at Khobar Towers, my deepest sympathy. The loss of your loved ones was our motivation to make this assessment as thorough and as objective as possible. It is our most sincere desire that our recommendations will help prevent further such tragedies.

I would also like to acknowledge the magnificent work being performed by the airmen of the 4404th Wing (Provisional). The reaction of these men and women to the bombing saved many lives. The care provided by the Wing's medical staff as well as the British, French and Saudi medical teams who helped treat the more than 500 Americans, Saudis and third country nationals injured in the blast was remarkable. That the Wing resumed enforcing the No-Fly Zone mission within 48 hours of the tragedy is further testimony to the professionalism and fortitude we observed throughout the command.

I might add that this tremendous dedication to duty, enthusiasm, and genuine patriotism were also evident in all the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines we visited in theater. We can all be proud of our servicemen and women serving in the Middle East and their steadfastness in the face of a terrorist threat as they accomplish a very difficult mission.

##### ASSESSMENT BACKGROUND

Mr. Chairman, if I may summarize the background of the assessment: On June 25, 1996, a truck bomb we estimated to contain the equivalent of 3,000 to 8,000 pounds of TNT exploded outside the northern perimeter of Khobar Towers, a facility housing U.S. and allied forces supporting the coalition air operation over Iraq, called Operation Southern Watch. Nineteen U.S. servicemen died in the blast and approximately 500 more were wounded. The perpetrators escaped.

Three days after the attack at Khobar Towers, Secretary of Defense Perry appointed me to head a team to examine the facts and circumstances surrounding the attack. In a far-reaching charter, the Secretary of Defense directed me to assess the extent to which the casualties and damage sustained were the result of inadequate security policies, infrastructures, or systems. The Secretary also asked me to recommend measures to minimize casualties and damage from such attacks in the future.

Within 24 hours of receiving the charter, a Task Force began to form consisting of officers, noncommissioned officers, DOD civilians and retirees from the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines throughout the country. Representatives from the Department of State, Department of Energy, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation also joined us. Each brought special expertise to the Task Force. This dedicated team completed its work 60 days later.

During its assessment, the Task Force interviewed over 400 servicemen and women as well as U.S. and allied Government officials. The team assessed 36 sites, visited each headquarters involved and spoke with the entire chain of command from the Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Central Command to the sentry on the roof at Khobar Towers. We further analyzed hundreds of documents. This sizable task was eased by cooperation from the command, all federal agencies involved, the Saudis, the Governments of Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt as well as our British, French, Israeli, and Jordanian allies. All recognized the importance of the Task Force's mission to the future security of U.S. forces de-

ployed overseas and fully supported our effort to find more effective ways to deal with terrorism anywhere.

The task force presented the Secretary of Defense with 26 findings and 78 recommendations pertaining to force protection, command relationships, policy issues, intelligence, divisions of responsibility, accountability, and technology.

#### TERRORISM BACKGROUND

Terrorism represents an undeclared war against the United States. Sometimes labeled the "weapon of the weak," it is nevertheless a powerful strategy. It provides our opponents a force projection capability that far exceeds their conventional military means.

The military forces of the United States are currently superior to all others in the world. Convinced of the futility of challenging our forces directly, some enemies are waging war against us asymmetrically. Some of these enemies believe that our greatest vulnerability is the American intolerance for casualties in the pursuit of objectives that often do not have an apparent direct link to vital national objectives. A small number of potential enemies have selected terror as a faceless, low-risk, high-payoff strategy that the U.S. political system finds difficult to counter.

Thus, what we saw at Khobar Towers was not the act of a group of malcontents looking for publicity. It was the act of a unit with a mission to demoralize our troops, discredit our foreign policy, pit ally against ally, and strike at our national spirit. Terrorists will use any means to accomplish these goals. They find no weapon unthinkable, no carnage too great, no victim too innocent. If our nation proves incapable of responding to terrorism, the terrorists will continue to represent a significant threat to us, especially to our servicemen and women deployed overseas.

#### THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE'S REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT

The Secretary of Defense adequately addresses the main findings and recommendations of the Task Force but the "Devil is in the Details"—how it will be enacted, the follow-through to ensure those actions are actually implemented and not forgotten.

#### DOWNING ASSESSMENT TASK FORCE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A comprehensive approach to force protection is required. This approach would combine awareness and training, physical security measures featuring advanced technology systems, an enhanced human intelligence capability and specific protection measures tailored to each location.

#### A DOD FOCAL POINT

A single focal point within DOD is needed to develop, issue and inspect compliance with force protection physical security standards. This single Department of Defense element would be responsible for force protection, including both antiterrorism and counterterrorism. This element would have policy, resources, research and development responsibilities, as well as the responsibility to ensure commanders in the field receive the force protection capabilities they require.

#### STANDARDS

DOD must establish force protection standards. The State Department has one methodology for assessing the threat, its buildings and vulnerabilities. DOD has used some of those standards in the past, but they were never intended for use by military forces. DOD must establish standards for force protection that take into consideration a threat that has escalated since the DOS standards were devised in 1985. These standards would address how we assess threats, how we prepare to meet those threats, and how we assess our vulnerabilities.

#### COMMAND INVOLVEMENT

Command emphasis and involvement in force protection are crucial. We found that the practices, tactics, techniques and procedures used to protect forces varied widely. Without common guidance from above and direct involvement of commanders at every level, it should come as no Surprise that the degree of success achieved by units we visited also varied widely. Training in force protection and risk management should be mandatory for officers and senior NCOs deploying to high threat areas.

## UNITY OF COMMAND

Unity of Command is a basic principle of all military operations. In order to have a unified approach to force protection, one man must be in charge in the Gulf region. The Goldwater-Nichols act assigned great power to the unified combatant commanders. I believe the law's intent was to strengthen joint operational command while allowing the services the mission of training, equipping and sustaining the force. Force protection is an operational issue. There are training and equipping pieces to it, but ultimately it is an inherent function of command. Placing two of the service components—Air Force Central Command at Shaw AFB, South Carolina, and Army Central Command at Ft. McPherson, Georgia—in charge from a distance of 7,000 miles away satisfies the letter of Goldwater-Nichols, but it does not satisfy the spirit of the law. While a commander in chief may, under Goldwater-Nichols, delegate operational control of forces in his theater to the service components, doing so dilutes the concept of unity of command and circumvents the real intent of the law, which was to put the joint commander in chief in charge of operational matters. As the Secretary of Defense's report states, a CENTCOM Forward Headquarters is one example of how such unity of command could be achieved. We believe it is very important to assign operational control of all forces operating in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region to one forward-deployed headquarters.

## RESOURCING AND MANNING

Emphasis must be placed on proper resourcing and manning. Our units overseas must have the resources to do the job—especially when conditions change such as when short-term missions become semi-permanent; when additional missions are added—mission creep—and when a major new element is introduced, like a terrorist threat. Our manning policies must support continuity and cohesion.

## INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence did provide warning of the terrorist threat to U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia. As a result, those responsible for force protection had both time and motivation to reduce vulnerabilities. However, it was not enough. Tactical details were needed, and they could only have been provided by human intelligence. The Long Commission investigating the 1983 Beirut-Bombing found that our HUMINT capability and counterintelligence capabilities had eroded and recommended we take immediate action to address this significant shortfall. Today we still have enormous difficulty in gaining firsthand, inside knowledge of terrorist plans and activities. The Department of Defense must invest more time, people, and funds to develop HUMINT and counterintelligence capabilities in threatened areas to help thwart further attacks. The Director of Central Intelligence has assured me that he will carefully examine our finding that the restrictions on the recruitment of sources currently hamper the efforts of national intelligence agencies.

We also need theater and national analysis of long-term trends, intentions and capabilities of terrorists.

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The division of responsibility between the Department of State and the Department of Defense does not provide U.S. forces adequate force protection. We recommended that DOD personnel should be assigned to the combatant commander unless they directly support the Embassy's Chief of Mission, in which case the U.S. Defense Representative would provide force protection. The State Department simply is not equipped to protect large numbers of DOD people.

## CHAIN OF COMMAND

The chain of command was responsible for protecting the forces at Khobar Towers. The Department of Defense must provide clear standards and guidelines for providing security and training. U.S. Central Command relationships in the Gulf were designed to support what was originally a short-term contingency—Operation Southern Watch—and transition to war. Temporary joint task force organizations and structures should be reviewed periodically by the Department of Defense to ensure they adapt to changing threats and missions. U.S. Central Command must provide JTF-SWA operational control and sufficient resources if that headquarters is to be responsible for force protection. Theater-specific security and training guidelines are needed. Both U.S. Central Command and U.S. Air Forces Central Command should have accomplished force protection visits, reviewed the threat reports and vulnerability assessments. Finally, assigned Security Police units should be



manned, trained, equipped, and structured for sustained operations—to include an organic intelligence capability.

The Commander, 4404th Wing (P) did not adequately protect his forces. Many measures to improve security inside the compound had been taken but, specific measures available to defend against other forms of terrorist attack to include a stand-off attack, such as moving personnel from the vulnerable perimeter, were not accomplished. Additional protection, such as installing Mylar on windows, were postponed. Although threats and vulnerabilities were largely known and on-site resources were inadequate to meet those threats and vulnerabilities, the chain of command was not notified that Khobar Towers needed help; the local commander did not notify his superiors or his Saudi counterparts of the shortfalls. It appears that the “fly and fight” mission and “quality of life” took precedence over force protection. Protecting the force is an integral part of enforcing the “No-Fly No-Drive” mission, because if we don’t adequately protect our people and installations they cannot perform their mission.

#### THE SAUDIS

The Saudis shared responsibility for the security of U.S. servicemen and women and installations in their country. They acknowledged their responsibility for security outside the fence of the compound, while the 4404th was responsible for security inside. The Saudis were unable to detect, deter, and prevent the truck bomb attack outside the perimeter fence at Khobar Towers. I found that the Saudis and other friendly Governments in the region are willing to help us provide better security in the future. It will require maintaining better continuity in the working relationships with local host nation officials as well as inculcating a willingness for lower echelon commanders to surface issues to the chain of command when those issues cannot be resolved satisfactorily at their level.

#### TECHNOLOGY

The Task Force discovered/found a manpower intensive approach to force protection used in the Gulf. We found sentries equipped with only binoculars, standing 12-hour shifts in 120 plus degree heat, bomb dogs with an effectiveness of 15–30 minutes being used to inspect vehicles at entry points, and crude highway traffic control barriers as blast protection.

American technology is the best in the world. We can and must provide our forces with state of the art sensors, blast protectors, automated entry points and cargo inspection devices. We also must assist our commanders in applying this technology. We have enough inspectors. We need helpers who can point out deficiencies and then make the corrections by helping commanders overseas install these advanced systems.

#### SIZE OF THE BOMB

We believe that the Department of Defense estimate of 20,000 pound bomb is inaccurate. Our estimates approximate the bomb size to be 3,000 to 8,000 pounds—most likely about 5,000 pounds. We arrived at this estimate based on a number of factors. Our Task Force experts, who have considerable field experience in explosives, physically surveyed the site and had extensive consultations with counterparts from other agencies. We interviewed the airman who was in an unprotected position, 80 feet away from the bomb when it detonated, survived, and was on his feet the day after the bombing. I, personally, with my team of experts, walked the site of the explosion and observed foliage still on trees and bushes in the vicinity of the blast. In addition, we inspected the vehicles parked around the blast site and noted that they had received damage commensurate with a bomb of approximately 5,000 pounds. Why is the size of the bomb important? A 20,000 pound bomb might be seen as indefensible, an excuse for not taking appropriate countermeasures—and that is wrong. The key to an effective antiterrorism program is to reduce vulnerabilities to probable threats. In any event, the Task Force found that even a 220 pound bomb, the size used in Nov 95 at the Riyadh bombing, detonated 80 feet from Building 131, would have caused significant loss of life and injury.

#### SUMMARY

Unless we learn, disseminate, and apply the lessons learned about terrorism, we will repeat the tragedies of the past. From the National Command Authority to the team leaders in the field, force protection is a primary function of command. That responsibility demands that we take the protection of our forces against terrorism

into consideration when we are developing our policies, structures, budgets, facilities, and every operations plan.

Our assessment was not a criminal investigation. While I have made recommendations that the Secretary look into some of the deficiencies we noted, I did not recommend specific actions be taken against any individual. Any decision on culpability belongs to the Secretary of Defense and the chain of command.

What I did recommend is that we use the lessons of Khobar Towers to improve our structure, our policies, our training, and our intelligence, as well as increase investments in available technologies to better protect our servicemen and women against terrorism.

The Task Force has been particularly pleased with the reception of our report by the Secretary of Defense and the prompt corrective actions either already taken or being worked. As I noted at the beginning of my statement, our goal was to contribute to the prevention of such tragedies as occurred at Khobar Towers. I believe our report and the actions taken or initiated by the Secretary of Defense will significantly enhance force protection for the armed forces.

We can and must provide better protection for our servicemen and women. I believe our report provides the Department of Defense a blueprint for change that will help us accomplish that task in future.

Chairman THURMOND. Secretary Perry and General Shali, I appreciate your statements accepting responsibility for the failure of the chain of command. I also join you and other members of the committee in expressing my condolences to the families of the airmen killed in the bombing. The best we can do in memory of those who have died is to ensure it does not happen again.

Now, we will have 6-minute rounds in order for everybody to get a round as soon as possible, and I will now start.

Secretary Perry, following the bombing of our office of the program manager, Saudi Arabian National Guard, in November 1995, where five American military personnel were killed, one would expect that beginning at the very top there would have been a very strong and renewed emphasis on force protection that would literally reverberate through the chain of command. I find no evidence that this occurred at any level of the chain of command. Why was there not more command emphasis at every level, at the very top?

Secretary PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I challenge the assumption. There was not only an interest in counterterrorism before the November bombing throughout the Defense Department, but at the time of that November bombing it became clear that we had special problems in Saudi Arabia.

We did take a number of very significant actions. I visited Saudi Arabia just a few weeks after the bombing, along with the CENTCOM commander; General Shali visited at about that same time, and followed up with a visit to the Central Command to review the actions that were being taken through an extensive set of actions. At Khobar Towers alone, there were more than 130 separate actions that were taken. These actions clearly were not enough.

I think in retrospect it is quite clear that our actions, implicitly at least, were assuming bombs of about the same size and same nature, which proved to be quite wrong. But there were many actions taken that were successful in one very important respect, in that they did prevent the penetration of the security perimeter which happened in the Lebanon bombing.

In fact, the Lebanon bombing was one of the examples that was used in discussing with commanders what they should be prepared

for. They put a very heavy emphasis on those measures which prevented penetration of the security perimeter, but that was not enough, as it turned out, against a bomb of that size. But had those measures not been taken and that security perimeter been penetrated, I have no doubt that there would have been hundreds, hundreds of fatalities.

General Shali, do you want to comment on that?

General SHALIKASHVILI. Mr. Chairman, even before the bombing of OPM/SANG in November 1995, there was in fact policy guidance in the field. There were procedures for how to operate in a terrorist environment, procedures that prescribe threat conditions, and procedures that need to be taken at each particular condition. Central Command had JCS guidance, and built their planning based upon that guidance, and the procedures were supportive of each other.

When OPM/SANG bombing occurred in November, Secretary Perry dispatched a threat assessment team not just to the region, but to our worldwide commands to assess the status of our force protection measures.

Central Command had a number of threat assessments ongoing. Specifically in Khobar Towers there were two conducted by the Air Force that came up with some specific, 40 or so, recommendations. All but a handful of those were completed, and they dealt with not only what they also perceived to be the most serious issue, which was terrorists gaining entrance into the compound, but also with such things as ensuring that chemicals could not be put into the water supply system, and trying to look at as many threats as possible.

Why they did not look at the issue of stand-off distance, I cannot tell you, but it is important that we understand that they took an awful lot of measures.

As a matter of fact, Secretary Perry and I have already said, if you count them up, some 130 separate measures, trying to first of all understand what the most serious threat was, and then working on all of those other things. They had not yet completed everything by the time the bomb went off, and we wish they had, but they had not. It was not because they were not in high gear trying to fix it and not because they had not asked outside agencies to come in and give an assessment of what they ought to be doing. They did on two separate occasions. It just was not enough.

Chairman THURMOND. General Shali, one of the tenets of command is that a commander must check those things that matter most, yet no one in the chain of command above the 4404th Provisional Air Wing, including the service component and regional combatant commanders, visited Khobar Towers military complex. Both of these key commanders should have been aware of the threat, and the force protection shortcomings, and should have visited the complex to get a personal view. Can you explain why this was not done?

General SHALIKASHVILI. I have discussed the matter with General Peay, the CENTCOM commander, on more than one occasion. He, like I, regrets that he personally did not visit that facility, but he visited many, many of his facilities, and this is just one that he did not come to.



He is, however, absolutely convinced that not only the 4404th commander visited that facility, but also that the component commander and the staffs that were looking into those issues for him and a lot of senior people had visited Khobar Towers and had looked at what General Schwalier was doing.

I was in the vicinity of the air base, and I reviewed with General Schwalier what security measures they were taking. I was not at Khobar Towers myself, but I had no indication, after getting briefed, that anybody on the ground perceived any difficulty in either what they were doing or getting support for what they were doing. I spoke with more than just him, but with a large number of senior people who were in and around Khobar Towers and that air base. I think the same thing probably happened to the CENTCOM commander, in that all the reports and indications he was getting from his subordinate commanders were that that operation were proceeding all right, and that security was being strengthened.

I myself concentrated more on the facilities in Riyadh, and so I went to OPM/SANG, and I went to USMTM to get briefings and a walk-through on those actions that they were taking to correct that which had not been corrected at the time of the OPM/SANG bombing.

Chairman THURMOND. My time has expired. Senator Nunn.

Senator NUNN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Downing, on the question of force protection, you make it very clear in your report and in your oral statement that force protection in your view is an operational issue, is that correct?

General DOWNING. That is correct, Senator.

Senator NUNN. Who had operational control in the situation?

General DOWNING. The operational control for the Air Forces was maintained by Ninth Air Force at Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina.

Senator NUNN. For force protection?

General DOWNING. That is correct.

Senator NUNN. So they were located thousands of miles from the scene?

General DOWNING. That is correct, Senator.

Senator NUNN. In your opinion, who should have been given the operational control in terms of force protection?

General DOWNING. In my opinion, I think the commander of JTF-SWA should have been given operational control of those forces and given the resources to execute operational control.

Senator NUNN. In your opinion, did you find that that would have made a material difference in what happened? Is that speculation?

General DOWNING. I think it would have made a material difference. You have a commander on the scene who lives it, breathes it, smells it, knows it, he is threatened himself, and he would have been in charge.

I would like to point out that there is one component commander forward, and that is NAVCENT, Naval Forces Central Commanders in Bahrain. Vice Admiral Tom Fargo is the commander, and I can tell you the difference in the approach of that command to what we saw at the other locations was clear and noticeable. The

presence of that commander forward who has operational control with the forces makes a significant difference.

Senator NUNN. So there is really not the question of whether a component commander, per se, is given the operational control for force protection. The question is whether that component commander is on the scene, and what you are really saying in this case is the component commander was not on the scene. In other cases, giving this operational control to a component commander that is on the scene would meet your standard, is that right?

General DOWNING. Senator, not exactly. The joint doctrine that applies Goldwater-Nichols gives the commander flexibility to structure as they see fit to accomplish the mission, but I believe the principle is that the joint commander should have operational control of the forces.

The services still retain command less operational control. This includes the training requirement for the service-peculiar forces, and also logistics and administration, so you do not burden down that war-fighter with those type of responsibilities. But you do give him the ability to directly to into those forces that he has and direct them to do the kinds of things that Goldwater-Nichols let us do, which is structure themselves and conduct themselves as he directs in order to accomplish the mission.

Senator NUNN. Did the combatant commander, General Peay, have authority, clear authority to be able to designate any person he chose? Could he have designated the joint task force for this job, or was there anything about them that prevented that?

General DOWNING. My understanding of the way this functions is that he had the authority to do that. I will defer, though, to the Chairman.

Senator NUNN. General Shali, the same question to you on this, but the other question I would like to ask is this. Is this command arrangement the way all the forces are being operated around the globe? What about Bosnia? What about Korea? what about Europe? What about other places? Was this an aberration in separating force protection so far from the scene, or was this standard operating procedure now?

General SHALIKASHVILI. Let me first say that Goldwater- Nichols makes it clear that the combatant commander must have the full authority and has the responsibility for all combatant forces in his command, and clearly all our regional CINC's have that authority, including General Peay. Therefore, he had the authority in turn to appoint any commander that he sees fit as that commander who has operational control of the forces, and who has force protection responsibility. There is nothing above him in either doctrine, directive, or innuendo that would have prevented him from doing it.

General Peay and the condition with Joint Task Force Southwest Asia is unique in our command arrangements. All other joint task forces are organized essentially along the lines that General Downing states.

Senator NUNN. So this was unusual, and is not the way we are operating, for instance, in Bosnia?

General SHALIKASHVILI. That is correct, this is not.

Senator NUNN. In Bosnia, the commander on the scene has force protection responsibilities?

General SHALIKASHVILI. That is correct.

Senator NUNN. How about in Korea, and Europe, and other places?

General SHALIKASHVILI. That is correct, in each case it is different than it was here.

Now, when the shutdown of the Black Hawk helicopters occurred, I directed all CINC's in the name of the Secretary—

Senator NUNN. That was in Northern Iraq?

General SHALIKASHVILI. That is correct. I directed all CINC's in the name of the Secretary to reexamine all of their joint task forces to ensure that we were in compliance with doctrine, published doctrine, and we are structured and equipped to ensure that missions could be carried out, and if missions had changed or broadened since the last time the joint task forces were established, that the necessary adjustments were made to the joint task forces.

In the case of Joint Task Force Southwest Asia, this was accomplished in great detail, and General Peay's point was that he wanted to remain organized as he was because of the unique nature of his operations compared to other CINC's. That is, the greater geographic separation, and the necessity for his command to be able to transition from peace to war very rapidly, because we could never tell at what point Saddam Hussein would begin to move against Kuwait again. It is very different than other task forces that we have.

Senator NUNN. Looking back on it, was General Peay correct, or was General Downing correct in his assessment that he should have been the CINC commander having operational responsibility for force protection? How do you assess it now, looking back on it?

General SHALIKASHVILI. Because I was not satisfied after we looked at it the first time on two separate occasions, I sent a team from my staff to go back and investigate how the joint task force was operating. I did that in 1995, and I did this again in the spring of 1996.

Each time, the teams came back and said that while he has organized himself slightly differently than doctrine recommends, he is able and is in fact conducting his missions extraordinarily well.

Senator NUNN. But in this case, on this particular point, getting away from the general statement, who was correct, looking back on it?

I know this is retroactively, but who was correct, General Downing in his recommendation that force recommendation be on the scene, or General Peay, in his recommendation that because of the uniqueness it would be removed from the scene?

General SHALIKASHVILI. It is my belief that General Downing is right. In light of the threat to force protection that we now have in the region particularly, we should give one man, forward-deployed, the responsibility and the full authority to handle force protection. So we have directed that commander Joint Task Force Southwest Asia be given full authority and responsibility for all combatant forces assigned to his command in support of Operation Southern Watch, but that is not the only point that General Downing makes.

General Downing also says that all forces, including combatant and noncombatant, should be under a single commander for force



protection. To do that will require quite an extensive headquarters, and there is a balance between increasing our presence over there with another large headquarters, or leaving it as we have it now.

That is why in my statement I said we are investigating the feasibility of establishing such a headquarters on the Arabian Peninsula and the advisability, because there will be potentially a price to pay for it. But if we can, I happen to be of the view that we will be best served if we can have that kind of robust headquarters forward that could provide force protection for all forces, not just combatant forces, but the noncombatant forces there as well like OPM/SANG and USMTM.

Senator NUNN. So you have taken action on the combatant forces, but you are studying the noncombatant?

General SHALIKASHVILI. That is right, because I have to do something different in a forward area in order to do that.

Senator NUNN. My time has expired. Thank you.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Warner.

Senator WARNER. Mr. Chairman, I associate myself with all expressions today of sympathy and sorrow for the victims and their families.

General Downing, may I say to you, well done. It is not easy for a military professional to be active retired, to issue a report of this nature. It appears to have been done thoroughly and objectively and fairly. That is a commendation to you personally and to those who have worked with you.

Mr. Secretary and General Shali, regarding your forthright statements of accountability today, I hope that they will be followed in a similar fashion by all those who feel accountable subordinate to you right down the chain, so that we know the full and complete story on the issue of accountability.

I would like to go to the year 1983. I remember so well when our distinguished chairman, John Tower, went to Beirut and the area, to the airport, to see the bombing of the marines. I was privileged to have accompanied him on that trip.

I refer back now to a *New York Times* editorial today entitled Pentagon Negligence, which I shall put in the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

# Pentagon Negligence

NEW YORK TIMES

September 18, 1996

Pg. 20

The Pentagon's commendably candid report on this summer's terrorist bombing in Saudi Arabia induces a disquieting sense of déjà vu. Once again, the Defense Department has proved more adept at investigating its security lapses than in preventing them. Many lives would have been saved if the Pentagon had learned from its previous failures to safeguard American forces stationed in the Middle East, including the 1983 Marine barracks bombing in Beirut that killed 241 people.

The report on the June 25 truck bombing in Dhahran that killed 19 Americans is a searing indictment of Pentagon incompetence. Wayne Downing, the retired Army general who directed the inquiry, makes clear that the security breakdown started at the upper levels of the Pentagon and ran down through the chain of command to the Air Force general on the ground in Dhahran.

The Pentagon brass in Washington, and the United States Central Command, which directs American forces in Saudi Arabia, provided no guidance or security training standards to protect the airmen in Dhahran. Intelligence reports about terrorist threats, including indications that the Khobar Towers apartment complex was under surveillance by terrorists, were not acted on aggressively enough by the Air Force commander in Dhahran, Brig. Gen. Terry Schwalier.

In an assessment of his work in Dhahran that General Schwalier completed just hours before the bombing, he did not even mention security issues, despite several warnings during his yearlong tour that the apartment compound was particularly vulnerable to a terrorist strike.

Contrary to initial Pentagon accounts that Saudi authorities persistently blocked additional security measures, the Downing inquiry found that no serious effort had been made by General Schwalier to extend the narrow security perimeter of the apartment compound. That common-sense step would have made the buildings less vulnerable to a

powerful truck bomb. Even the simplest safety measure, covering the apartment windows with plastic film to prevent them from shattering in an explosion, was put off. Wounds from flying glass were a major factor in the deaths of 12 Americans.

The inattention to security is astonishing. The Downing report shows that all the exculpatory Pentagon talk of unanticipated threats and unexpectedly powerful bombs is folderol. The problem was negligence. After the Beirut bombing and the unflinching investigation that followed it, plus last year's terrorist attack on American military offices in Riyadh, the Saudi capital, there is no plausible excuse for inadequate security.

Those responsible for the feeble security measures at the Khobar complex must be held accountable, including the senior civilian officials and generals who considered terrorism a secondary threat. Cashiering or court-martialing junior officers, the Pentagon's favored way of assigning blame after a serious failure, will not suffice in this case.

Given the Defense Department's dismal security record, including the lax performance of Defense Secretary William Perry and Gen. John Shalikashvili, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the White House and Congress must keep close watch on the latest security enhancement program outlined by Mr. Perry on Monday.

His plan to set rigorous security standards, give antiterrorism efforts a higher profile in the military and make better use of intelligence sounds sensible in theory. The real test is whether it is carried out more effectively than similar programs initiated after earlier attacks.

It should not have taken another truck bombing to get the attention of the Pentagon. More American servicemen, 265, have been killed in three terrorist attacks in the Middle East since 1982 than have died over the same period in combat operations worldwide, including Grenada, Panama, Somalia and the Persian Gulf war.

Senator WARNER. The last paragraph reads: It should not have taken another truck bombing to get the attention of the Pentagon. More American servicemen, 265, have been killed in three terrorist attacks in the Middle East since 1982 than have died over the same period in combat operations worldwide, including Grenada, Panama, Somalia, and the Persian Gulf war. That is an absolutely astounding statistic.

I go then to the Long report. I knew Admiral Long very well. I worked with him when I was in the Department of Defense.

I would like to read part of the report issued. The bombing, the terrorist attack was October 23, 1983, the report was issued 20 December, 1983.

On pages 6 and 7, the Long commission found that the security measures in effect in the marine amphibious unit compound were neither commensurate with the increasing level of threat confronting the marines nor sufficient to preclude catastrophic losses such as those suffered on the morning of 23 October. The U.S. CINCEUR—that is, the chop chain at that time, operational command, shares any responsibility for the events of 23 October 1983.

On page 130, the Long commission basically concluded that the threat was severely underestimated.

Page 132, terrorism is a threat to all U.S. forces and all military personnel assigned overseas can expect to encounter terrorism in some form. Consequently, they need some understanding of the terrorist threat and how to combat it.

Page 15, the commission concluded that the marines were not trained, organized, staffed or supported to deal effectively with the terrorist threat in Lebanon. The commission further concludes that much needs to be done to prepare U.S. military forces to defend against and counter terrorism.

Lastly, the commission recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the development of doctrine, planning, organization, force structure, education, and training necessary to defend against, and other counterterrorism, and that last paragraph is what you have done recently and informed the committee today, am I not correct?

Secretary PERRY. That is correct, Senator.

Senator WARNER. Now, my concern is, we had the Long report in 1983. We had this tragedy here in 1996. How do we know that a future Secretary 5 years hence will not sit here and say that the report that was issued by Secretary Perry and General Shali was not followed? What assurance can you give us that you and your successors will follow the report that you have submitted to this committee.

Secretary PERRY. That is a very good question, Senator Warner. I would answer that in two ways. First of all, I am confident that some future Secretary of Defense will be sitting here and trying to explain why some terrorist attack has succeeded against our force. We will not have a zero defect system. There will be attacks that succeed against our force no matter what we do.

Having said that, to get to the heart of your question, then, the key part of the changes that we are making is to institutionalize them to build them into the system in such a way that after General Shali and I have passed on to other jobs they will continue to



be carried out. They will be part of the institution, and you should judge the effectiveness of our recommendations not only by how well they fix the problem today, this month and this year, but the extent to which they are becoming institutionalized. That is a very important test of what we are doing.

Senator WARNER. Mr. Secretary, can you take such steps to ensure that the posture statements by Secretaries of Defense and, indeed, Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs hereafter contain a specific section relative to compliance with these reports?

Secretary PERRY. You can be sure of that.

I might say parenthetically that the first guidance that I issued when I became the Secretary moved readiness up to the first priority, and it had a profound effect on the way the system functioned, and by the same token, this will have an effect.

Senator WARNER. So it will be a part of the responsibility of this committee to address those sections.

My last question is on page 10. Secretary Perry, you state as follows: On the whole, I accept General Downing's recommendation.

That qualification seems to me to indicate, to take exception with some sections of the Downing report. Can you so state with specificity what sections of that report on which you have a professional view, or otherwise disagreement?

Secretary PERRY. Senator, I am in agreement with what General Shali has already described to you relative to the recommendation on changing the command structure.

That is to say, we accept the recommendation, and have already acted on the recommendation to give the force protection responsibility to the JTF commander. We are reserving whether we should make the full sweep of the change recommended by General Downing, because we also clearly see the downside of moving a large headquarters over there, which simply introduces more people to the terrorist threat.

Nevertheless, we will take that very seriously.

Senator WARNER. Mr. Secretary, if there are other responses to my question, would you put it in the record, because in fairness to my colleagues, I want to have strict adherence to the time.

Secretary PERRY. Of course.

Senator WARNER [presiding]. Senator Exon.

Senator EXON. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

Welcome, gentlemen.

I want to congratulate both you, Mr. Secretary, and you, General, for your up-front recognition of the responsibilities that you have in this area, and I thought that your comment to the question asked by my colleague from Virginia was right on point. There are going to be in the future people sitting here answering questions from people like me, and we are in a very dangerous world.

I know both of you so well, and I have seen you with groups. I know that you are hurting as much as anyone right now with regard to searching what you might have done to prevent this. We have got to be more vigilant than ever, but the facts of the matter are still that these things are going to happen in the future.

With that regard, let me ask you, Mr. Secretary, because I brought it up at one of our earliest meetings after this latest tragedy, with regard to dependents, I happen to feel that there has

been a shortcoming for a long, long time with regard to dependents in areas where we face unusual danger.

I believe since our discussion, as you may remember, we have taken action. I read in the press about it. It was not given much attention, but have you significantly changed the number of dependents that were, just like the people, serving there? What have you done about that? Has there been a significant change?

Secretary PERRY. Senator Exon, there has been a very significant change, and I might say a very painful change, a change that I made against the advice and even the pleading of some of my commanders in the field, and some of my diplomatic representatives in the field. Nevertheless, it was a change which I thought was necessary.

Nearly all of the families and all of the schoolchildren who were in Saudi Arabia have been moved back to the United States. I can assure you that was a very difficult decision, made in the face of quite a bit of contrary advice.

Senator EXON. I could tell that you were under some pressure when I asked you that question of why it was not done. I congratulate you for doing it. That took some courage, also.

General, I want to add my statement to those of others, to the very—

Secretary PERRY. Excuse me, Senator, let me just for a moment give you the criteria we used for who stayed and who went.

Senator EXON. Yes.

Secretary PERRY. The relatively few people whose missions require them on multiyear assignments, we allowed their families to stay with them, but we are changing it so that nearly all of the assignments over there will be 1 year or less, and those will be unaccompanied tours, so that meant that a great majority, maybe 90 percent of the dependents, were then sent home.

Senator EXON. I am glad we are taking a look at that. As a soldier who was away from my family for 2 whole years, I recognize that it is a difficult sacrifice, but those are what we expect of our people today, and I think, now that you have made the suggestion, they will understand too.

General, let me once again thank you for the good job you have done. I know it has not been easy.

Let me ask you this question. In your review of the situation over there, were there any instances where you discovered or were concerned about the protection of our forces there being hobbled in any way by lack of adequate funds or budgeting?

General DOWNING. We actually, Senator, found no instances where we were hobbled by lack of funds. There were times when we found that people had the perception that they were hobbled by lack of funds, but when we went back and actually looked at the request that had gone in, with, I think, one exception, every request for security-type things have been granted, but some people have the perception that these moneys were not available.

Senator EXON. But their perceptions were incorrect?

General DOWNING. Their perceptions were incorrect.

Senator EXON. I want to digress to something else which is very important right now, Mr. Secretary. It is not directly related to the subject of this hearing, but I think it is timely.

As you know, the New York Times carried a story yesterday based on declassified information from the 1950's indicating that the Eisenhower administration knew that North Korea had failed to turn over some 900 American prisoners of war. Do you have any comment on that? Have you had a chance to take a look at it?

Secretary PERRY. General Shali, do you know anything about that?

General SHALIKASHVILI. No, I do not, other than that article.

Secretary PERRY. All I can say is, we have been investigating for years whether there might be any living Americans, POW's, in North Korea. We have no evidence to support that.

We know that there have been deserters, American deserters from the Korean War who went to North Korea, and some of whom are still alive, but in spite of years of investigation, over many administrations and many Secretaries of Defense and Chairmen, we have found no evidence of living American POW's in North Korea.

Senator EXON. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Mr. Chairman, my time is up.

Chairman THURMOND [presiding]. Senator Cohen.

Senator COHEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, General Shali, and General Downing, comparisons are said to be odious most of the time, but we have learned that sometimes they are also quite relevant.

As Senator Warner has indicated, the Long commission report provided some comparison for where we were then and where we are today. I was thinking of another example or comparison. We are currently still trying to determine whether or not a TWA flight leaving Kennedy Airport was destroyed by a bomb, a missile, or some sort of mechanical failure.

But I want to go back to 1974. There was another TWA flight that left Tel Aviv on its way to JFK with stopovers in Athens and Rome. The flight left Israel, landed in Athens, and then left Athens on its way to Rome, and about 18 minutes after taking off from Athens it exploded in mid-air, killing some 79 passengers and another 9 crew members.

The National Transportation Safety Board conducted an investigation and came to the conclusion that in fact it was a bomb that had probably caused the explosion, and had recommended that expeditious development of explosive detection equipment be developed and deployed as quickly as possible. That was in 1974. 22 years later, we still have not deployed bomb detection equipment.

It seems to me it is relevant in the sense that this committee was very instrumental in creating a special Operations Command, SOLIC, also creating a Department of Defense Special Operations Low Intensity Conflict Department with an assistant Secretary for it.

It came, I might say, over the objections of the Pentagon at the time. There was strong objection coming from the Pentagon to the creation of such a special command, or giving that command the kind of authority that we felt was necessary, and ultimately we prevailed. There was strong opposition to Goldwater-Nichols. Ultimately, we prevailed in that regard.

We either call it macromanagement or micromanagement, but nonetheless, Congress played an important role in that, and it



seems that it is difficult to overcome institutional opposition in key areas of our operations.

I mention that because one of the key components for creating the Special Operations Command was the new emerging threat. We had gone from the Cold War threat to a new threat that we were told at that time was going to be terrorism; global terrorism heading our way, either at our bases abroad or here even domestically at home.

So we have heard report after report that the new threat and emerging threat is terrorism, so I am somewhat surprised—not surprised, perhaps, Mr. Secretary, but you use the words, that we have to radically rethink force protection. I guess the question that comes to mind is why do we have to radically rethink force protection, since we have known that radical terrorist action has been the wave of not only the future, but even in the past, and only now we are starting to radically rethink how we go about protecting our forces.

Is there some sort of institutional opposition to this that remains? Is there some reason why there was not a more aggressive mind set, at least, that force protection is as important as force projection, particularly in an area that is the hotbed of terrorism?

We talk about terrorism, what are we talking about? We are talking about the Middle East. We are talking about Iran, Iraq, and Libya, et cetera. So why does it come as any kind of a surprise that we are seeing the results of a terrorist action directed towards U.S. forces?

Mr. Secretary, you indicated this was a hundred times more powerful, I think, than the bomb that exploded in November. I believe, General Downing, you indicated it was much smaller. A 280-pound bomb also would have inflicted a great deal of damage.

I do not think we want to get into the whole question of whether it is 280 pounds, or 5,000 pounds, or 2,000 pounds, but I have at least a problem in terms of whether there is an institutional opposition to this kind of protective measure being taken.

Initially, I would point out, some of the press reports, American press reports, indicated that according to the Pentagon it was the Saudi Government that was in opposition to a request for expanded perimeters.

General Downing, you have indicated in your report you could find no such request having been made.

I guess, Mr. Secretary, the question I would ask is, has there been any attempt to track down where these reports came from? Has it caused problems with the Saudi Government, first pointing the finger at them saying they are the ones who did not give us permission to expand, when in fact it appears that we did not make the request in the first instance?

Secretary PERRY. I think General Downing's report is the most authoritative description we have of that. The reconciliation between the two accounts is that there was a request made. It was made informally, not in writing, at relatively low levels, and made of civil authorities in Saudi, not military authorities. So everybody who was stating yes, it is, or no, it does not, were telling the truth from their own point of view.

Senator COHEN. Mr. Secretary, we are going to go into closed session at the conclusion of the open session, and I will just talk in general terms perhaps about intelligence matters. The question I would have is—and we will talk about the numbers of threats that were received—was there any overall, either you, General Downing or General Shalikashvili, assessment as to whether these threats that were made toward the United States forces there or observations that caused people to suspect that something might be up in nature of a threatening movement, of spying on the facility, cars driving up, taking notes, et cetera? Were any of the threat assessments of such compelling evidence that would warrant reaction to that, either individually or collectively? In other words, were there simply loose strands of information coming in that were not collated or collected or disseminated? What has happened? What did in fact happen with the threats that were passed along, so that there could be a reaction on the part of the commanders?

Secretary PERRY. The threat assessment for the entire Saudi Arabia area was high. That is, the message to the field was that this is a high threat area. Specifically it was known that it was high at Khobar Towers because of some specific suspicious incident that occurred there. Certainly, they were known to the commander because they were reported to us by the commander.

Senator COHEN. I guess what I am asking is was there a point, was there a critical mass of information that developed that you could take one incident, a car drives by, they use binoculars to start surveilling the facility, that might not be sufficient to warrant any kind of large reaction on our part, security measures, but then you have a second and a third and a fourth and a fifth and a sixth. Is there some critical mass at some point in time where you believe you should have reacted more quickly and did not take action, General Downing, looking at it in hindsight?

General DOWNING. The assessment discovered that the OPM/SANG bombing was the wake-up call. There was a lot of different information out there, a lot of different levels. A lot of it had threads, a lot of it did not.

There were several surge periods, when all of a sudden attention was focused. We got reports, a string of reports, different kinds of reports, about large amounts of explosives being smuggled into the Kingdom, and we are talking about tons. We are not talking about pounds, we are talking about tons.

A Saudi citizen was arrested on the Kuwait border with about 75–80 pounds of high grade military explosives, professionally secreted, in his car. Everything got hot then.

Then the Haj period came, the Islamic pilgrimage period in April and May, and this was another period during which in the past they have had some very serious incidents at the holy places. The entire Kingdom was on a very, very high alert, to include the U.S. forces.

After that was over in May things started to ease, and then, with very short notice, we got the report, notified by the Saudi Government, that they were going to behead the four people involved in the Riyadh bombing. Immediately, everyone, because of the threats that had been coming out of the dissident groups in London and in other places had said if this happens we are going to attack the

U.S. forces immediately, everybody went on another very, very heightened alert period, and we were just starting to come off that period on the 25th of June when the event took place.

So what we did not have, though, was the point I made in my opening statement. We did not have that tactical intelligence that says there is going to be a bomb at Khobar Towers on this night, but what we did know is there was a lot of information out there, and we had three soft targets identified on the Peninsula, and Khobar Towers was one of them.

Senator COHEN. Thank you. My time is up.

Senator WARNER [presiding]. Thank you very much, Senator Cohen.

Senator Glenn.

This is the order of arrival. The clerk indicates that you are next, Senator.

Senator GLENN. OK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think we have a tendency that we want to find somebody that is going to be a scapegoat for some of this, and I do not think that is the way to be going. We are not going to have 100 percent security anywhere we go in the world unless we hunker down some place and just do not do anything, do not perform our mission while we are there. We are going to be vulnerable to some extent, I believe. This time it happened to be an apartment building, we got a lot of people killed, and we regret that as much as anybody has ever regretted anything.

But if it is not apartment buildings, one of these days we will have buses blowing up with Americans on it, cars targeted with Americans in it, individuals shot, and going clear back to '46 in China, they were going to shoot a Marine a day until we got out of China. Well, we stayed there, but they carried it out. The first couple of days there was a Marine shot each day.

This stuff is not just at buildings and it is not just big bombs and it is not just fertilizer bombs or whatever else they can put together. To me it is not just bombs, because they could use mortars, they can use gas, they can use biological warfare one of these days. What if the berm had been out there 200 yards away and we dumped some canisters of anthrax or something over the thing and let them drift into the site in there. How many people would have been killed from that? I do not know.

We tend to just go for whatever the last emergency was. One of these days we will have some stingers fired at airplanes over there. We will shoot down some transport planes, probably, with stingers on them. How are we going to protect against that kind of stuff?

I do not really know the answer, and neither does anyone else, of course, on all this kind of stuff. But I know you are giving new authorities and policies and directions and supposedly—and we say oh, yes, that is very good. But I do not know how the policies relate to, say, fertilizer bombs or how they relate to mortars or gas or biological. If you are a commander out there you just have to take your best judgment of the moment, and hopefully you have the funds and the detection and the best technology.

I come back, Mr. Secretary, to page 15 in your statement where you say that on August 23rd I requested additional funding for fiscal year 1996 and 1997 force protection antiterrorism requirements



in Saudi Arabia and around the world. How much was the request, who was it made to, does this committee need to take a more immediate action on that before we are out of session one of these days or where does that stand? Because to me we can put, of course, all the directives in the world, but unless those people out there that are on the firing line in effect have the equipment, have the intelligence—and that is a key element, as Senator Cohen mentioned a moment ago, if we do not have the best intelligence in the world, trying to find out who is doing this stuff—I think we are going to continue to see it at some level, whether it is buses or individuals or cars or whatever it is, or stingers. What is the status of your request for additional funds, so we can really honestly do some of this stuff?

Secretary PERRY. Two comments, Senator Glenn. First of all, thank you for your support on providing those additional funds. I do not need the help of the Senate at this time because I have the authority under the Feed and Forage Act to take immediate actions that are necessary for force protection, and that is what I have done.

But that act requires me to come to the Senate in due time and request a supplemental appropriation. But there is no need to do that in this term.

Senator GLENN. The reason I brought that up, I just read the last sentence, the sentence before that on page 15 says for example, on August 9th, after the Khobar Towers attack, Deputy Secretary White invoked the Food and Forage authority to pay for moving our forces in Saudi Arabia and improving security. Then the next sentence which I read to you.

What kind of operation is this, we have got to back to get money to move people out? We have got to go to Food and Forage? That is not a normal source of funding for moving troops around, is it?

Secretary PERRY. It will become a normal source of funding because in due time under that act we have to come to the Congress and get authority to do that. We have to come for a supplemental appropriation for a reprogramming, and we will do that. We just felt it was not necessary to do it this month, when you have so many other things on your plate.

Senator GLENN. The Saudis were supposedly responsible for security outside the fence, the commander of the 4404th was for security inside the fence. All this depends a lot, though, on intelligence. General Downing, did you look into the intelligence setup over there? Is it adequate—I know it is never adequate, because we would always like more information on what our potential adversaries are going to do. But where do we stand with that, and are we improving that situation?

General DOWNING. Senator, the intelligence was sufficient to provide warning, certainly. The intelligence apparatus that the commander of the 4404th Wing had under his control was oriented almost primarily on flying air operations into the box in Southern Iraq. We have to remember, that is what those forces were over there for. They were not over there to defend their perimeter. That became an inherent part of it, but when they went over there there was no terrorist threat. So their orientation has always been on flying those air operations.

The terrorist threat then came up and there was not any kind of an adjustment. He still had the right kind of intel apparatus to do his air mission, but what he did not have was the kind of dedicated support and analysis that he needed to help him with that ground threat, with that terrorist threat. He was forced to get this in an ad hoc manner from a variety of different sources.

He only had a handful of people, and they were not oriented towards a ground threat, so he has got people coming from other places in the intelligence agency telling him the kind of things that he needed to know. But he did not have the apparatus that he needed to really do this as he would have, say, in an Army brigade or a Marine Corps regiment, where you have got those things organic to those formations, and they are oriented towards ground-type threats.

Senator GLENN. I do not know how much more time I have here, but how are we doing with regard to technology and sensors and protectors and that sort of thing? Are we going to have enough money to get the best out there so that we get the best protection for all of our troops?

Secretary PERRY. I do not have any concerns about providing funding for R&D programs that are promising, and there are a good many of those. But some of the things you would most like to be able to do, like a really reliable, low-cost, hand-held bomb sniffer, is a pretty damn tough problem. We know it can be done because dogs do it. We have not yet figured out how to reproduce in a machine what it is that the dog—in a practical machine—does. But to the extent we can identify promising approaches to this, we can make the funds available to do it.

Senator GLENN. Just one other thing. If we are getting into chemicals and things like that, General, do all of our troops out there have, and are they fully trained with regard to gas and chemical warfare, and do they have that with them all the time in case there is an attack like that?

General SHALIKASHVILI. I think that we certainly need to look at whether units that are not combat units in fact have good protection. Also do the administrative units and others that are forward-deployed in this environment have adequate training, the various sensors that they need and so on. So I will tell you probably the picture right now is spotty on that. We need to fix that. I feel fairly comfortable about ground and other combat units that are more attuned to operating and training in that environment. I am not so sanguine at all about the support units that now also find themselves on the front lines, because the front line is wherever they are.

Senator GLENN. Wherever they are.

My time is up. Thank you, gentlemen.

Senator COHEN [presiding]. Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. General Shalikashvili, we have not got much time left in the session here before we go out into the election season, and I would like to ask a couple of questions on a related topic that is important to certainly the people of my State and I think most Americans. In December, will we have completed our mission in Bosnia?

General SHALIKASHVILI. I believe, Sir, that in December we will have completed the military tasks that are outlined in the Dayton agreement, and it has been my recommendation all along that at that time we bring our soldiers back from IFOR. What is now being discussed is the issue whether NATO would feel that there is a follow-on military mission different than the one now, for which a different military force should be put together and sent over there.

I do not know the answer to that. I am fairly certain that the United States will participate in that debate, but I do not know how this will come out. All I can tell you is what I have recommended all along, that IFOR, constituted as it is with the missions it has, can terminate and should terminate in December.

Senator MCCAIN. Well, in all due respect, General, when we had a hearing last December and many of us alleged that an exit strategy was not a date certain, when you and Secretary Perry said that the troops would be coming home after 12 months, there was no one who was left with the impression that there would be some kind of residual force. Now, that is what is unfortunate about this whole scenario, because you and Secretary Perry, and I certainly want Secretary Perry to respond if he wants to, gave the clear impression that after our mission—our mission—in most American's view, when the mission is done the troops come home and no further troops are required, we would have no more obligations in Bosnia.

That is clearly not the case. We all know that after the election the President of the United States, upon your recommendation, will come forward and say that we have to have another force in the region because the Europeans have already stated clearly and unequivocally that they cannot or will not do it themselves. Now, that stands in direct contrast to your comments on December 6, 1995, quote: There is no doubt that by the time we leave in 12 months our mission will be completed. Quote: 12 months is the right time set to bring the forces home. To bring the forces home, not but we may have to leave forces there, to bring the forces home. You did not say IFOR, the forces.

What disturbs me is this lack of candor with the Congress, which, by the way, has characterized the whole lack of consultation over the situation in the Persian Gulf, leads to skepticism and then mistrust.

Secretary Perry said on December 6th, I was the one that recommended to the President that this be a 12-month mission. I cannot conceive how the military tasks that have been given to us could possibly take longer than 12 months. Quote: I firmly believe that in approximately 12 months this force can withdraw. There was no mention in response to repeated questioning at that hearing, well, we may have to have another force there for an indefinite period of time.

So I have to tell you, perhaps I and other members of this committee were not very comprehending of what you said, but when reading the English language, we were under the impression, despite our protestations to the contrary, at least some of us, that you could not set an exit date and call that a strategy, that we are clearly not going to have our, quote, forces home. You may change the name. You may change some other to some other alphabet soup



name. But the fact is that they are going to be there and it is going to be very disappointing.

I have to tell you, when you come back here for additional authorization and appropriations, because there will be several more billion dollars probably at risk, there will be a much larger level of skepticism as to whatever commitments you make at the time.

I would be glad to hear a response of either you or Secretary Perry.

General SHALIKASHVILI. When we were discussing IFOR prior to its deployment in December, it was my clear understanding that we were deploying that force to execute the missions very narrowly prescribed in the Dayton agreement. People were questioning whether the military tasks outlined in the Dayton agreement could in fact be completed in 1 year. Although I do not remember my exact words, I do believe that I repeatedly stated that I thought the military tasks outlined in the Dayton agreement could be completed in less than a year, but that we ought to stay through the elections, and for good measure a year, to make sure that everything was done, and that at the end of that year the force could be brought home. I am still of that view.

Senator MCCAIN. But at no time, General, did you or Secretary Perry in any way intimate that there would be additional requirement for American forces, many of them the same people maybe under a different name, to remain there in harm's way in Bosnia. Now, I can tell you that that is what we were concerned about, and unfortunately, I think it is very clear that is going to happen. It is very clear in January you are going to be back here, and we are going to be talking about some force that must remain there because the Europeans failed to do their job, even though those same Europeans failed to support us in the Persian Gulf.

May I ask, Mr. Secretary, in retrospect, did we do everything that we could as far as the inspection of facilities in Saudi Arabia that would have helped us either preclude or make better preparations for the attack on Khobar Towers?

Secretary PERRY. In my opinion, Senator McCain, there were quite adequate inspections. We had two different inspection teams that were there. They wrote extensive surveys and made extensive recommendations. It is also true that nearly all of those recommendations had been implemented by the time of the bombing. It is also clear that those recommendations did not go far enough, given the threat we actually have.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. My time has expired.

Senator COHEN. Before calling on Senator Lieberman, would you care to comment, Secretary Perry, in response to what Senator McCain has indicated about the troop withdrawal and deployment?

Secretary PERRY. Yes, I would. First of all, on the question of completion of the IFOR mission, I associate myself almost word for word with what General Shalikashvili said. I think any reading of the full testimony we gave there would say that the 12-month mission we were talking about was the mission to complete the military tasks from the Dayton agreement. That is being done on schedule and will be completed by the end of the year. If I had any questions about that, it was whether there might be some major al-

tercation occur at the elections. We are now past the elections, so I have some confidence in saying now that that mission will be completed by the end of the year.

The second point I would make is that I do not accept the presumption that Senator McCain makes that we are going back with a second mission in January, and that is an issue which will be discussed and debated seriously beginning at the NATO defense minister's meeting next week. The outcome of that discussion is not at all clear, and I have neither an open or covert conclusion on that question, and I want to see how the analysis goes, what the facts on the ground are.

I think that sending an American unit back in there next year will pose a very substantial problem, not the least of which the reasons given by Senator McCain.

Senator COHEN. Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you, Senator Cohen.

Secretary Perry and General Shalikashvili, it has been an honor for me to get to know you in my time on this committee when you have been in your positions of leadership, and I think you know that I have the greatest respect for you. I think I have some sense of you as human beings beyond the titles, and I am sure that this experience at Khobar Towers was one of the most painful, if not the most painful, moment in your time of leadership. I appreciate and admire what I would call the sense of responsibility and courage that you demonstrated in appointing General Downing and giving him a charter to go ahead without limit to do the investigation he has done. I must say that I find his conclusions to be deeply troubling, and of course ultimately heartbreaking, because the result of this episode was the death of 19 American servicemen.

General Downing, you have said in your statement, and I quote: In a far-reaching charter, the Secretary of Defense directed me to assess the extent to which the casualties and damage sustained were the result of inadequate security policies, infrastructures, or systems. My conclusion, having read your very thorough and thoughtful and I think balanced report is that you conclude that to some significant degree the casualties and damage sustained were the result of inadequate security policies, infrastructures, or systems. Am I correct?

General DOWNING. That is correct, Senator.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Secretary Perry, I am sad to say that I read General Downing's report as a finding of a kind of negligence in various ways, and again acknowledging that hindsight is always clearer than foresight and that we will never be able to do enough to protect, as Senator Glenn has said, against every possible terrorist action, it does seem to me—I think in a way you said it in response to an earlier question—a lot was done, but not enough was done. I want you to just, if you would, set out what the—let me step back and say it. In other words, someone is to blame here for these inadequacies that General Downing has found, and for the information of the committee and the families of those who died and the American people, if you would indicate for the record what is the process of military justice that is convened in this case? Obviously, I am not expecting any comments or reference to any par-

ticular individuals, but what is the process that you have set in place here now?

Secretary PERRY. I have requested the Secretary of the Air Force to conduct a full investigation, and recommend and take the necessary disciplinary actions. The Air Force has convened an authority to do that. That is underway, and they will have their findings completed by the 4th of December.

If there is any culpability that requires disciplinary action, here will then be the appropriate disciplinary action to any Air Force personnel under their authority, and if they, in their findings, believe that any other person outside the Air Force at any level is culpable, they should recommend and pass that on to me for further action.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you. We will obviously await with some interest the results of that proceeding.

General Downing, let me ask you a very different kind of question. In the days and weeks after the explosion at Khobar Towers there were suggestions, particularly in the media, that the Saudis, the Saudi Government or Saudi personnel, had blocked attempts to improve security at Khobar Towers. I read your report to say that those accusations were not fair. Is that correct?

General DOWNING. That is correct, Senator. We did not find those to be founded.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So that in the sense that you did not find that American personnel there had made requests of the Saudi Government for increases in, for instance, the perimeter around Khobar that were rejected by the Saudis?

General DOWNING. We find that they did ask to move the fence. They asked at a lower level, but they only asked to move it 10 or 15 feet. It did not have anything to do with standoff distance from blast. They asked to move it for observation purposes. They asked for increased security and they got increased security. They saw the increase in Saudi patrols in the parking lot. This was done at the staff level, and at the lieutenant colonel and colonel level.

But what we did not find is any serious misgivings that our forces had in Dhahran about Saudi security ever raised to them at the senior level, at the counterpart level out there in the Eastern Province.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate that statement, because in fairness to our allies in Saudi Arabia, I think that we are getting criticized for shortcomings or blocking attempts by us to improve security. A number of my colleagues on the committee have raised this very important question that you have raised, General, about the extent to which the command of this joint task force was not unified and some sections of its service sections were actually reporting back or under the command of people 7,000 miles away.

The reference points that have been made on the committee are to Beirut, but as you say in your report you could also go back to the tragic shoot-down of the two U.S. Army helicopters by U.S. Air Force F-15's in April of '94, in which the joint task force headquarters—well, in which the question was raised by the joint task force Provide Comfort about the extent to which the lack of unified command may have contributed to that tragedy.



Secretary Perry and General Shalikashvili have indicated today that in this case, which was described as somewhat unique because of this particular joint task force, they have now unified under the commander there matters of force protection, but not, as I believe you recommended in your report, overall operations of the joint task force. Secretary Perry began to explain why. I wonder if you could make for us the argument why you believe all operations should be unified there under the joint task force commander.

General DOWNING. Senator, basically I think the man in the forward location that is physically living there, sleeping, eating, being subjected to the same threat as everyone else, has a better intrinsic feel, inherent feel, for what is going on, and will do those kind of things that have to be done to protect the force.

Certainly, the commanders of Air Force Central Command and Army Central Command are magnificent officers. I mean, they are first class, both of them. But the fact is they are 7,000 miles away. They cannot get there all the time. They cannot live there all the time. I think Goldwater-Nichols gave us the authority to do the kind of command arrangements that need to be done.

The Chairman has told us that—he has taken this thing in steps. He has transferred the operational control for force protection out there to the JTF. But the component commands still retain operational control of all the other elements. But he has told us that he is looking, he is directing Central Command to look at that and see if we should not put some kind of a headquarters out there, resource to take on the full operational control mission.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Which is what you would recommend.

General DOWNING. That is what I would recommend, yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you, General.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND [presiding]. Senator Hutchison.

Senator HUTCHISON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to say, first of all, how much I respect how this report was done. I respect the fact that you, Mr. Secretary, were willing to say to General Downing, you have the lead and I want the truth, and he produced a straightforward report. That was very tough, and I appreciate it. I have to say that the last two reports from the Department of Defense, this one plus the Air Force investigation of Secretary Ron Brown's plane going down, were very straightforward, pulled no punches, and I respect that.

Having said that, I have to say this report is devastating. When I think of the unnecessary loss of life, it is devastating.

I want to focus on one thing, because I hope that there has been a change since our first investigation of this bombing. I am going to quote from the testimony of you, Secretary Perry, and General Peay, the Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Central Command.

Senator Levin had asked the question regarding the midlevel colonel who had evidence that perhaps we had a problem and should extend the perimeter. General Peay said: "Should the fence have been out further? Yes. Were they working on it? I think they probably were. Should they have kicked it upstairs? I do not know. I just do not know."

Senator Levin then said: "What is clear is that they did not kick it upstairs. That is what we have heard from each of the three of you this morning."

Senator Lieberman came in and made a valiant effort at asking General Peay if perhaps he would reconsider his statement about elevating security requests: "General Peay, your comment about whether that officer on the ground who had the conversation with his Saudi counterpart about extending the perimeter to the 400 feet should have kicked it upstairs, it seems to me, and your statement indicates you are not really sure. I think we have got to create a record here that sends an unmistakable message in spite of all that is going on in a theater like this that security, force protection, is so important that once we have designated the security level, the threat level, as high, that any question as fundamental as this one of extending the perimeter has to be kicked up almost immediately."

It says: "If there was a bomb ticking here and we could have done something, and we had one bright officer on the ground who understood that he could have done something to limit any casualties here and it was not done. I want to ask you"—to General Peay—"if you would reconsider that question, reconsider your statement about whether in fact that officer should have kicked this upstairs."

General Peay responded: "Sir, that is a great question. You are into the guts of what we call the art of command. I think we have to have latitude in judgment at every level, platoon leader, company commander, battalion commander, all the way up the chain of command. I do not think we can necessarily legislate that it should be kicked up. I guess I am trying, sir, to point out that this is a competent chain of command that encourages openness. I do not think if I had legislated kicking up an argument at the province level that I think I could come up with another 50. I think we have to teach our youngsters to make those value judgments."

Senator LIEBERMAN. I regret that, and say respectfully, I think that is exactly the wrong message to send.

Senator Lieberman then gave you, Secretary Perry, a chance to make another point with regard to General Peay's point, and you supported General Peay, and Senator Lieberman said respectfully that he did not understand.

I came in as a third member of this committee and asked General Peay to reconsider his statement. I am asking you today, now that we have this report, do we now have force protection at a level of priority that if this colonel-level conversation took place today, with a Saudi counterpart, the chain of command and instructions would require that he kick it upstairs immediately?

Secretary PERRY. Yes.

Senator HUTCHISON. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Robb.

Senator ROBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Perry, General Shalikashvili, General Downing, thank you very much for your extended appearance here today. I know that both the consideration of this matter and preparation for this hearing and others take a great deal of your time. It is certainly

very important, and I share the respect that all of my colleagues have indicated to you for what you have done.

I must say that I am troubled by an aspect of our hindsight that seems to be so clear with respect to assignment of blame, and in this I probably differ with many of my colleagues. Not that we should not indeed hold those who make mistakes in judgment or make other mistakes accountable, and indeed, Mr. Secretary and General Shalikashvili, I very much appreciate your acceptance of responsibility and accountability in this process. I think that is extremely important.

But I am a little bit concerned about the assignment of blame, if we want to call it that to someone other than those who carried out this terrorist act and/or ordered this terrorist act to take place. I hope that we will not come to the conclusion in the necessary followup, General Downing, to your report, that we have to find specific people to blame or scapegoats if indeed they are not culpable under the circumstances. I am not yet convinced that there is a long list of those who are truly culpable and could meet the 20-20 hindsight test.

In this regard I have just a couple of questions. One, General Downing, with respect to the criteria that are both explicit and implicit that you applied to this particular situation in terms of providing a very candid and tough report to the Secretary of Defense and to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. Are there other units in this immediate theater, in CENTCOM, or deployed elsewhere around the world, that could or would either meet or fail the same criteria?

In other words, are we post tragedy applying criteria that other units might equally fail to meet if we applied the criteria in the strict sense that all of us can now sit around with 20-20 hindsight and say this was the critical factor that was overlooked or ignored, whatever the case may be?

General DOWNING. I would say, Senator, that probably that is true. There probably are others that would fail those criteria. We visited not only Khobar Towers, but we visited 35 other sites in the region, and the Secretary directed me, asked me, to concentrate my initial efforts on Saudi Arabia. I spent 11 days in Saudi Arabia at the bases there. I then went to the other bases, high-profile bases in Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, and then, because we have such a large concentration of American service people, I went to Egypt. We did find a string of deficiencies in these places.

I have got to also tell you we found some things being done extremely well, and this was not a "gotcha" drill. This was a drill where we went in and looked at them as quickly as we could.

Senator ROBB. I was not implying that motive to your mission, General.

General DOWNING. No, I understand that, Senator. But the spirit that we took this in was that I sat down with each commander after we had visited his base and went down a list of things that we had found that we thought he could take action on right away. Then if there were some things with some lead time that he could get actions started, to get these things going.



Secretary Perry told me when I left on this thing that if I had any problems, if I found anything very glaring, to pick up the phone and call him, call him direct, because we were not going to wait 6 weeks or 8 weeks for this report to come out.

Senator ROBB. General Downing, that aspect of what happened is something that I think all of us applaud. The fact that it was thorough and without restrictions or reservations on what you could do under the circumstances. My concern goes to whether or not other bases, other commanders at any level, would necessarily be able to meet the same criteria that are implicit in this particular examination, and whether that will be true in the future.

Let me ask one other question. With respect to other types of activity, particularly nonfixed bases or assets, for moving assets, targets, that are not in a tactical movement mode, i.e., not a rough rider or something that may be moving as though in a combat situation or expecting imminent danger between two points, could the same kinds of criteria subject some subsequent commander to the same difficulty that anyone in the chain of command this time may face with respect to the movement, say the administrative movement by service personnel between logistics facilities and forward-deployed units, at anyplace within this theater of operation?

General DOWNING. We just did not look at standoff bombs. We looked at everything. We looked at movement, we looked at stand-off attacks, snipers, ambushes, assassinations, surface-to-air missiles, we did not restrict ourselves to standoff bomb attacks. We took whatever a terrorist was capable of doing.

You have also got to take a very good look at what the local threat is, what you are against. Not every terrorist group is the same.

Senator ROBB. Oh, absolutely, which is implicit.

General DOWNING. So we had to take a look at what they had, what we thought they had, what their capabilities were, and so we applied this against a wide range of threats, not just bombs.

Senator ROBB. Have all of the units that are deployed, particularly within this very sensitive area of operations, been apprised of any of the shortcomings that may have been found in the course of your deliberations?

General DOWNING. Let me refer that to General Shalikashvili or the Secretary.

General SHALIKASHVILI. We certainly have made the report and all of the findings available to Central Command and to all the other unified commanders. I think they probably have not yet had a chance to digest it, put it into a form that needs to go out to all the commands. But they do all have the unvarnished total report.

Senator ROBB. I would only point out that obviously any time an implementation between the time that they are apprised of some shortcoming and the possibility of intervention by some force that did not have our best interest at heart could place us in a similar situation. Again we have to, it seems to me, apply the standard of reasonableness under the circumstances, and ultimately, because we would be just as tough on you from the other side, come back and apply some cost benefit in the largest term. There is only so much that you can do without depriving your forces that are deployed of the ability to perform all or other missions, and that is

the kind of tradeoff Secretary Perry certainly made reference to in his statement, and we appreciate it.

One last single question with a single response: Is there any reason to believe that the Saudis today are not cooperating fully with respect to every request that has been made as far as the security of any of our deployed forces are concerned?

Secretary PERRY. I went there 6 weeks ago and laid some very heavy requests on them which involved the movement of all of these forces, very difficult, very expensive for them to implement. They agreed to all of them, and I have gotten nothing but first-rate cooperation.

Senator Robb, let me make one other point relative to the first issue you were making about the people in this joint task force. We are looking with a very pointed microscope right now at one incident, which is this bombing at Khobar Towers. I would point out to you that joint task force has conducted 120,000 sorties since they have been in operation. They have been engaged by surface-to-air missiles, they have engaged back and fired at them, they have been fired on six times by surface-to-air missiles.

These 120,000 sorties have been conducted flawlessly. There has not been a single loss of life in any of that activity. So we are looking at a first-class operation, and we are judging the people who are conducting that. We must keep that front and center.

Senator ROBB. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. That is a point I have attempted to make in other venues and will continue to make, that we ought to be very proud of the forces and what they are doing there.

Mr. Chairman, that completes my time, and I thank you.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Coats.

Senator COATS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Downing, you indicated that in your investigation you had the full cooperation of all Federal agencies in this investigation. Were you able to assess whether or not full cooperation between Federal agencies involved in our efforts in Saudi Arabia was taking place before the incident? Was there any indication that there was lack of cooperation or sharing of information?

General DOWNING. No, Senator Coats. I got no indication of that.

Senator COATS. Secretary Perry, were you aware, or General Shalikashvili, were you aware of any breakdown in communication between various Federal departments (Department of State, Department of Defense) relative to terrorism and terrorist activities and responses that the military might make versus what the State Department might recommend? In other words, were there any instances where the Department of State suggested a response different relative to force protection than what you desired to carry out?

General SHALIKASHVILI. I know that we had different procedures between State and Department of Defense when declaring threat conditions, and as a result of the OMP/SANG bombing and the investigation that followed it, that came to the surface in order to correct that.

But I do not know of an incident where in the execution there was a disagreement that caused any particular problem. General Downing might have found something, but none of those were

brought to my attention. What was brought to my attention only was after the OPM/SANG bombing that they have two different procedures and we ought to get all on the same sheet of music.

Senator COATS. General Downing, would you like to comment on that?

General DOWNING. Right, Senator, there was something. I did not interpret your question as getting into that. There is a seam between Department of State and the Defense Department on how we evaluate threats, threat conditions. It is just two agencies, two Government agencies, coming at it from different ways. One of our recommendations in the report is that we resolve that, and that is something that the Defense Department is taking on. They are trying to do that.

Another one, a very significant provision was who was responsible for the DOD forces out there, and Secretary Perry has, and he states this in his letter, worked this out with the State Department as to how that division is going to be done. So both departments are addressing these two issues.

Senator COATS. But there are two questions here. One is threat assessment, and you have indicated there is a seam. The other issue is threat response. There have been reports that at least in some instances of threat response, there is a difference of opinion between the two departments as to what the threat response ought to be.

General DOWNING. I really did not see that. I saw some very, very concerned people out there, especially in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In fact, on all of the country teams, there was tremendous cooperation and very, very professional people, and what I found when I was out there in all these countries that I have listed was probably as good a cooperation as I have ever seen. So I am not aware of any, but I will refer to these other two gentlemen.

Secretary PERRY. There is one other area of difference in judgment, Senator Coats. My judgment was that we had to bring nearly all of our dependents out of Saudi Arabia. The State Department's judgment was that was not a good move to make, that instead we should work harder to provide better protection for them. So we had a difference of opinion on that.

I made the decision to bring them out anyway, and once I made that decision then they fully supported me in the move, in what had to be done to implement that decision.

Senator COATS. Well, I fully support that decision. I am sure it was a tough decision from a morale standpoint, but I think it was the right decision from the security standpoint.

Let me ask you this, Mr. Secretary, have we evaluated force protection on a domestic level for our bases here at home any differently subsequent to this situation in Saudi Arabia? Are we taking different measures?

Secretary PERRY. The force protection initiative and force protection measures we are describing here apply to all of our bases, and they certainly apply to domestic as well as overseas bases. How they are implemented will depend in each case on what the threat assessment is for that base. The threat assessment in Saudi Arabia today is not only high, it is listed as critical. There are no bases in the United States where we have that high level threat assess-



ment. That is the difference. It is not whether it is in the United States or overseas, it is what the threat assessment is.

Senator COATS. Is any review going on, though, of the force protection procedures domestically as a consequence of what we have learned?

Secretary PERRY. Yes. The procedures we are talking about, the changes that we have described to you, apply to all of our bases, domestic and overseas.

Senator COATS. It was mentioned, I think it was Senator Lieberman who mentioned or asked the question regarding the convening authority. What level will that convening authority take place, is that at the 4404th command level?

Secretary PERRY. Oh, no. No, that is a completely independent unit. It is a three-star general that is appointed by the Secretary of the Air Force. It has nothing to do with the operations over there.

Senator COATS. So they will be examining the question all the way up and down the chain of command?

Secretary PERRY. They will be examining questions all the way down and all the way up. While their actions will be limited to Air Force personnel, their findings are not limited to Air Force personnel, it can include other services, as well.

Senator COATS. Just one last brief question: General Downing indicated that it is important that we demonstrate we are capable of responding to incidents like this, that an inability to respond invites more attacks. Everything that we have discussed today has been a defensive response. Is there anything you can tell us in open session here relative to an offensive response, or is that something you ought to reserve?

Secretary PERRY. I would suggest we reserve that for the closed session, because a good offense in this case, which is really essential, depends on improved intelligence.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time has expired.

Chairman THURMOND. Thank you very much.

Senator Bryan.

Senator BRYAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, I want to compliment you, as a number of my colleagues have, in your selection of General Downing and the unfettered authority that you gave him to prepare this report. I think that is a mark of your integrity and reflects very favorably on your character. General Downing, I know it is a difficult job to pass judgment on colleagues, people that you have professionally worked with during your career, and I think you have put together a report that is candid and very thoughtful.

General Shalikashvili, I have a great deal of confidence in your leadership, and continue to enjoy that confidence.

I just say that on the occasion of our hearing before this committee on July 12th of this year, it was my sense at the time that there was a failure of command leadership in the field. After having read the report that General Downing has put together, I believe that is an inescapable conclusion. I do not know the circumstances, but I regret the fact that General Peay is not here with us today, as he was in July. But it seems to me that at the time that we had the hearing in July there was considerable media

attention and speculation that there had been some failure on the part of intelligence.

I must say that as you have characterized it, General Downing, there was sufficient intelligence information provided to fairly charge those with the command responsibility of the heightened risk that was involved, particularly at the Khobar Towers location. It seems to me that part of our responsibility on this committee is also to determine accountability, as well. Three rather modest measures may have averted all fatalities, and would certainly have reduced the level of casualties. That is the application of Mylar to the exposed window surfaces, the relocation of personnel in the exposed area to interior locations, and the positioning of the fence. None of that was done.

In the vulnerability assessment recommendations of January 1996, a recommendation is made that is somewhat prophetic, and that is the application of Mylar to the exposed surfaces, in that the cost of upgrading all perimeter windows is deemed to be too great, begin with the perimeter faces of building 133 and 131, then work clockwise around KT to building 117.

General Shalikashvili, my question to you, is not it a failure of command responsibility by our commanders in the field not to have implemented that recommendation?

General SHALIKASHVILI. I hesitate for a moment in my answer because I want to make sure that my reply does not complicate an ongoing action by the Secretary of the Air Force right now. So let me say that the recommendation that was made by OSI to put Mylar on the windows in this particular case, from where I sit now makes great sense, and in retrospect makes even more sense. But I am afraid to say anymore than that.

Senator BRYAN. I appreciate that. I do not want you to make a prejudgment, either, but I must say that I think that the American public is entitled to a clear understanding of how little it would have taken to have substantially reduced the risk. I am not saying avoid all risks, because I agree with Senator Glenn and others who point out that the potential risk that one faces with a terrorist threat are unlimited and confined only by the limits of human imagination. But this does not strike me as being something that is beyond the pale.

Regarding the movement of personnel to less vulnerable buildings addressed indirectly in the earlier vulnerability assessments, I must say that I am shocked, if I understand the testimony elicited by General Downing, and that is Brigadier General Schwalier testified that he never thought of evacuating these rooms. That suggests to me that there is some fundamental failure to impart in some way in field commanders the responsibility of taking all of the precautions necessary to protect those in their command. He said he never even thought about it, did not weight it or evaluate it, and I am taking that from page 57 of the report, if I inaccurately characterize that. I do not want to be unfair to the officer or to you, General Downing, but that is what the information indicates, there, that he never thought if it.

I must say that the request to reposition the fence, which we have heard considerable testimony on, it is my understanding that the only individual that we have been able to identify to have made

that request is a Colonel Boyle, who requested that the fence be moved 10 to 15 feet. Is that a correct statement to the record, General Downing?

General DOWNING. Colonel Boyle requested this in November of 1995, after the OPM/SANG bombing from his Saudi counterpart. Lieutenant Colonel Jim Traister, in March of 1996, requested of his Saudi counterpart that the fence be moved 10 to 15 feet. As I think I testified earlier, both Saudi counterparts do not remember this request.

Senator BRYAN. But those two different officers, then, at one point in time—

General DOWNING. Requested it.

Senator BRYAN. In reading your report, I got the impression that this was not a direct request. It was, would you be willing to reposition the fence? Am I correct in that characterization?

General DOWNING. Well, no. I think they wanted to move the fence. I think they were direct about that. But it was not a substantial distance to protect the building from blast. It was to get better observation into the parking lot. It was not 400 or 900 feet, which is what you would have needed for blast protection.

Senator BRYAN. I guess my thought is that this is an example of timidity, in my opinion, in terms of requesting a distance that would provide adequate protection. One does not get the sense, from the language that you have used in the report, that there was any sense of urgency that was attached to the communication with their Saudi counterparts.

General DOWNING. Senator, I do not think we can draw that inference.

Senator BRYAN. OK.

General DOWNING. In other words, I was not there. These people did care. As General Shali pointed out, they did do a lot of things to toughen that perimeter. It is not like they sat on their hands and did nothing.

Lieutenant Colonel Jim Traister is a real hero. He really did some fantastic security things around Khobar Towers. They did not get after the point of protecting from a bomb outside the fence.

Senator BRYAN. If I might ask the Secretary this one last question; my time is up. You have indicated in response to Senator Lieberman's question about the process of military justice, and I do not seek to prejudge that process, but you indicated you have asked the Secretary of the Air Force to make such a review. My question is, some of the officers in the chain of command who, in this Senator's judgment, ought to at least be evaluated in terms of their conduct are Army general officers. Would she have the ability to make an evaluation and a recommendation to you in terms of what course of action would need to be taken, if any, with respect to military justice?

Secretary PERRY. Yes. Yes, they would. That is explicit in their charter.

Senator BRYAN. I thank you, Mr. Secretary and I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



Let me commend all of you for your testimony—General Downing, for your report; Mr. Secretary, and General Shalikashvili, for the direction which you gave that the report be unvarnished. It is all very helpful, including your testimony. I think it is in the greatest tradition of our military and the Department of Defense what you have attempted to do, both in the report and through your testimony today.

I want to pursue Senator Bryan's line of questioning. Because I, too, am troubled by the field command's lack of action here. Commanders in the field, the way I read this, had authority to ask for Mylar; they did not. Had authority to request that the fence be moved and they did not. Whether or not someone will later on judge that that in some way makes them responsible, in terms of their duties and their obligations, is for a different assessment and a different place than here.

But the way I read the Downing Report—let me just start off on page 54. There has been discussion here about what authority the commander on the scene had. Should we change some structure in order to give more authority? General, the way I read your report, and I am quoting, Brigadier General Schwalier had both command responsibility and command authority for force protection in the 4404th Wing. Therefore, he could take appropriate measures to protect his force. Had the responsibility to notify his superiors when he was unable to do so.

Is that accurate, he had that authority?

General DOWNING. That is correct.

Senator LEVIN. Now, in addition, on page 55, it is stated that during his tour of duty, Brigadier General Schwalier never raised to his superiors force protection measures that were beyond his capability to correct, nor did he raise the issue of expanding the perimeter of security outside of the fence with his Saudi counterparts in the eastern province. The commander did not take actions that could have mitigated the effects of other forms of terrorist attack or secondary effects of a penetrating bomb.

Is that from your report?

General DOWNING. Yes, sir.

Senator LEVIN. All right. Part of your report is that there was an assessment that was made here, a vulnerability assessment on the Khobar Towers, which has been referred to by Senator Bryan, first, in June of 1995. But this was updated after the Riyadh bombing. It was updated in January of 1996. In that report, there is the following line, which I must tell you, I am fascinated by, and I want you to help me with it.

There was a Captain there named McLean, who made an assessment based on a much smaller car bomb possibility. Now I am reading from page 56 of your report. It was determined that such a bomb, exploding at 165 feet—and then you say the actual distance of the June 1996 bombing was 80 feet—it was determined that such a bomb would damage buildings and kill or injure exposed people. Captain McLean went on to recommend a 300-foot perimeter.

General DOWNING. Right.

Senator LEVIN. A 300-foot perimeter to mitigate the effects of a 200-pound blast. There is no evidence that any action was taken regarding this aspect of the assessment by the commander.

Is that correct?

General DOWNING. That is correct.

Senator LEVIN. You mean we had a commander on the scene—if I understand what you are saying—who had a recommendation from someone who was responsible to make a vulnerability assessment in January, a specific recommendation that the perimeter be moved out to 300 feet to mitigate the effects of a blast, and for whatever reason—and this will be judged elsewhere—the commander on the scene did not act on that recommendation; is that correct?

General DOWNING. Yes, Senator, that is correct.

Senator LEVIN. OK. Now, we have had a lot of discussion about whether or not the Saudis should have moved the fence 10 or 15 feet. Our people say we asked them. The Saudis have no notes about it apparently, no recollection. There is a disagreement about that. I think that is pretty clear. But according to your report, General, unless I misread this, our own assessment, our own vulnerability assessment in January of 1996 had a Captain McLean, who was in charge of the explosive ordnance detachment, recommending a 300-foot perimeter, and the commander taking no action based on that recommendation.

My specific question to you is, did our commander have authority to take some action based on that recommendation? For instance, could he have asked his command to take up the issue of the perimeter fence with the Saudis? Or could he have taken some action based on that recommendation?

General DOWNING. Sir, the answer is he had the authority and responsibility. In other words, the issue we have been talking about, with operational control of these forces, is at a much higher level than the commander of the 4404th Wing.

Senator LEVIN. But that commander had the authority to protect his forces, is that correct?

General DOWNING. He had the authority and he had the responsibility to protect those forces.

Senator LEVIN. All right. My question is, did you ask the commander on the scene why he did not respond to Captain McLean's recommendation that the perimeter be moved 300 feet? Did you ask the general on the scene as to why he did not take some action in response to that recommendation?

General DOWNING. As I recall, as we discussed this issue, the feeling was that the Saudis would not allow us to move that fence.

Senator LEVIN. So that even though what the Saudis had rejected was a 10- or 15-foot move, in terms of visibility—

General DOWNING. Right. There was no way they were going to allow a 300- or a 400-foot move.

Senator LEVIN. He apparently reached that conclusion, is that correct, the commanding general?

General DOWNING. You would have to ask him, Senator.

Senator LEVIN. All right. But that is something that you believe may have been the reason he did not ask or take up this issue with any higher authority?

General DOWNING. That was my perception at the time.

Senator LEVIN. But the question which is critical to me is that, in any event, he had the authority and he had the responsibility for force protection, he had a recommendation to move it from his own ordnance expert, and he did not make that request of higher authority to make that move; is that correct?

General DOWNING. That particular move, he did not make. That is correct.

Senator LEVIN. Or request?

General DOWNING. He did not make that request.

Senator LEVIN. Of higher authorities?

General DOWNING. That is correct.

Senator LEVIN. My time is up.

Chairman THURMOND. We have now completed the first round. We will go to the second round and have only 5 minutes each. I believe there are only four of us here.

General Downing, your task force estimates—and by the way, I just have three questions; if you will answer them very briefly—the size of the terrorist truck bomb they exploded outside the perimeter of Khobar Towers to be the equivalent of 3,000 to 8,000 pounds of explosives. In his letter to the President, Secretary Perry states that the estimated explosives yield of the bomb was the equivalent of 20,000 to 30,000 pounds. Why is there such a wide difference in the estimate of the bomb size between you and Secretary Perry?

General DOWNING. Senator, I think Secretary Perry ought to tell you about the scientific estimate.

Chairman THURMOND. How was that?

General DOWNING. The scientific estimate that he came up with. Our estimate was derived by field demolitions people who are military experts on demolitions. They looked at the physical evidence of the blast, the crater size, the soil composition. They also looked at the paint peeling and glass loss on vehicles in the parking lot, the fact that there was still foliage on the trees and bushes within 120 feet of the blast. Finally, we had a security policeman who had responded to the call for help, who was approximately 80 feet from the bomb when it went off. He not only survived, but he was on his feet the next day.

So our explosive experts, based on that evidence, that physical evidence, have estimated the size of the bomb to probably be around 5,000 pounds.

Chairman THURMOND. Do you now feel your estimate is more accurate or Secretary Perry's estimate?

General DOWNING. I would not have brought this up, Senator, if I agreed with Secretary Perry's estimate. We believe that 3,000 to 8,000, with 5,000 being the likely size, is correct.

Chairman THURMOND. General Downing, in Secretary Perry's testimony to the committee on July the 9th, he stated that the intelligence information was voluminous and pointed to a high threat level, but that the information was fragmentary and inconclusive. In your report, however, you find that the intelligence information warned of a terrorist threat to United States forces Saudi Arabia. Was the intelligence information of the threat such that the local



commanders and other military leaders should have taken steps to prevent an attack?

General DOWNING. Sir, we think that the intelligence information was of such a nature—and also other information available to the commanders—that not only were they alerted, they actually did take many measures to protect themselves, which has been pointed out by the chairman, and saved, potentially, other lives. So, yes, we felt the information did give them warning.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Robb.

Secretary PERRY. Mr. Chairman, may I comment on that?

Chairman THURMOND. Yes, sir.

Secretary PERRY. General Downing and I have no disagreement on the nature of the intelligence assessment. We both have the same view that there was adequate intelligence that there was a threat. That is why we had a high threat alert, and that specifically there was reason to be concerned at Khobar Towers.

We also agree, I believe, that the threat intelligence information was not of a tactical nature, but it was certainly a very strong strategic threat warning. I think we have no difference in point of view on that.

Chairman THURMOND. General Shali, do you have any comment on this?

General SHALIKASHVILI. No. I fully agree with that as well.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Robb.

Senator ROBB. Mr. Chairman, I have no additional questions. I might just observe, if I may, first of all, thank you for calling the hearing. I think it is important. I think we clearly have a responsibility to certainly the families of those who were killed, those who were wounded in this attack and, perhaps even more important, in a forward-looking context, to those families who are or might be at risk if we fail to heed any of the lessons that we could learn from this particular investigation. We will be very much indebted to General Downing for the thoroughness and the candor of that investigation.

This would otherwise be a disproportionate amount of time for the committee to take investigating a single incident, it seems to me. But given the importance of the recommendations for what we need to do in the future, I think it is entirely appropriate. I thank all three for what I know has been an additional very long afternoon.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Levin, do you have any more questions?

Senator LEVIN. I do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I would like to ask the Secretary if he could give us his explanation of the size of the bomb, as to why you believe it was the size you believe it was. I think we have heard from General Downing on that. I was out for a moment. But I am wondering if, Mr. Secretary, you have a different conclusion than General Downing, and whether you would give us the basis of your conclusion.

Secretary PERRY. Shortly after I requested General Downing to conduct his investigation, we also asked what used to be called the Defense Nuclear Agency—now it is the Defense Weapons Support Agency—to conduct a specific assessment of the size of the bomb.

These are technical people who are experts in weapons effect. They conducted an intensive study, including visits to the site and including computer simulations. Their judgment was that this bomb was probably in excess of 20,000 pounds of TNT equivalent.

I was surprised at the result. As a consequence of my surprise, I asked IDA, the Institute of Defense Analysis, if they would set up a team of independent outside experts to review the DNA report. They did. Their review tended to validate those conclusions.

Whether it is 5,000 pounds or 20,000 pounds, it is a hell of a big bomb and a big threat and a big problem. I think the simplest comment I can make about the discrepancy in data is that we are submitting with this report the analysis. So any independent outside group can look at that analysis and come to their own judgment about it. It is not simply a matter of making an assertion.

Senator LEVIN. General, one question on the Mylar, which Senator Bryan has gotten into. There was a recommendation in that vulnerability assessment that there be some kind of window protection; is that correct?

General DOWNING. That is correct.

Senator LEVIN. Was that done?

General DOWNING. No. That is the Mylar. The Mylar was deferred.

Senator LEVIN. Do we know why the commanding general there did not request that Mylar?

General DOWNING. He put it in his budget for next year.

Senator LEVIN. But do you know why he did not do it immediately, given—

General DOWNING. He did not have the money and he did not feel that if he requested it, it would be given to him.

Senator LEVIN. Have we denied any requests such as that for force protection that you know of?

General DOWNING. That was one of the things that we looked at, and we found that those kind of requests were not denied, except for one instance a year or two earlier, but not at that at that location. That was in another country and another service.

Senator LEVIN. Last question: Secretary Perry, are you familiar with an amendment which Senator McCain and I offered to the defense authorization bill, which creates a contingency account, an anti-terrorism account, that you could quickly utilize? I believe you supported that with a letter, is that correct?

Secretary PERRY. Yes.

Senator LEVIN. You indicated that although we spend about \$2 billion on anti-terrorism and perhaps \$3 billion on counter-terrorism, if you include special forces—and although this was a fairly small amount, involving I believe \$14 million in that account—that, nonetheless, I think in your words, that that would help focus some priority on that subject and give you some flexibility to quickly utilize some funds. Is that correct?

Secretary PERRY. They are high-leverage funds. They can be used for immediate emergencies, immediate problems.

Senator LEVIN. Are you familiar with another amendment which I offered, I believe the next day, which would have transferred some funds from a couple of fighters that the Pentagon did not request into that anti-terrorism fund?

Secretary PERRY. Yes, I am, Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. Do you know whether or not that was something which had your support at the time? This was for two fighters that were not requested by the Pentagon.

Secretary PERRY. I have felt for some time now that the cost of the force protection measures we are talking about is going to be quite large. We have already identified \$300 million worth of expenses. The expenses are going to be into the billions. The money is going to have to come from somewhere. Therefore, I had a positive response to the proposal you made.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND. Senator Levin and Senator Robb, do you have any questions that would require a closed session?

Senator LEVIN. I do not, Mr. Chairman.

Senator ROBB. Mr. Chairman, I have no questions. I think that we could pursue other information that should not be disclosed in open session. But I think, for the purposes of our hearing and our oversight, that the matters that we have addressed in open session are sufficient for whatever conclusions we want to draw from them.

Chairman THURMOND. Do you have any other questions, either one of you?

Senator ROBB. Not at this time, Mr. Chairman.

Senator LEVIN. I will have one question for the record, Mr. Chairman, if that is all right, about this operational control.

Chairman THURMOND. All right.

Chairman THURMOND. Secretary Perry, General Shali and General Downing, do you have any information that you feel you would like to pass to the committee in closed session?

Secretary PERRY. I do not, Mr. Chairman.

General SHALIKASHVILI. I do not, sir.

General DOWNING. I do not, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THURMOND. Well, I guess there will not be any closed session then. [Laughter.]

Does anybody have anything further they wish to say? [No response.]

Any Senators, any further questions? [No response.]

If not, I want to take this opportunity to thank the Senators who have been here and been faithful in this hearing. I want to thank the staff; they have done such a good job. I want to thank you witnesses, Secretary Perry, General Shali and General Downing, for your presence and for your testimony.

Thank you very much. We now stand adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND

##### STAND OFF DISTANCE TO FENCE

Senator THURMOND. General Downing, a security shortcoming at Khobar Towers was the inadequate distance to the perimeter fence. This shortcoming was as obvious before the terrorist attack as it is with hindsight. Your report makes clear that moving the fence was never made an issue by the U.S. chain of command.

Are you satisfied that the 4404th was the only level of command that was both aware of the problem and that it was also the only level of command that *should* have been aware of the problem?



General DOWNING. [Question was unanswered at time of printing. Any response received will be retained in committee files.]

#### ROLE OF OPERATIONAL COMMANDER

Senator THURMOND. General Downing, the Central Command Air Force, the Air Component of Central Command, has operational control over the 4404th Provisional Wing, and is therefore responsible for force protection measures. As the service component command, it also determined the rotation policies that were cited in your report as contributing to shortcomings in force protection.

Can you explain why Central Command Air Force was not cited in the report for deficiencies in this regard, especially when its commander, who was previously assigned as the Commander of Joint Task Force-Southwest Asia, was apparently fully aware of the force protection shortcomings at Khobar towers?

General DOWNING. [Question was unanswered at time of printing. Any response received will be retained in committee files.]

#### COOPERATIVE EFFORTS WITH U.S. ALLIES ON COUNTER-TERRORISM

Senator THURMOND. General Downing, during your investigation of this terrorist bombing incident you found that a number of our allies have extensive counter-terrorist and force protection experience from which the U.S. could learn and put to good use.

Can you briefly describe what you learned in this area?

General DOWNING. [Question was unanswered at time of printing. Any response received will be retained in committee files.]

Senator THURMOND. General Downing, you concluded in your investigation the erosion of HUMINT and collection capabilities, which may have enabled us to know more about the threats we face.

Describe what you believe to be the failures of our HUMINT and collection capabilities, and what actions can be taken to address this significant shortfall?

General DOWNING. [Question was unanswered at time of printing. Any response received will be retained in committee files.]

#### SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET REQUEST

Senator THURMOND. Mr. Secretary, the President's supplemental budget request only includes funding for immediate requirements for OCONUS, of which 50 percent is for physical security in Saudi Arabia. Is there a particular reason why no funds are included for installations in the United States?

General DOWNING. [Question was unanswered at time of printing. Any response received will be retained in committee files.]

#### LACK OF DOD GUIDANCE TO CENTCOM

Senator THURMOND. Secretary Perry, Operation Southern Watch is the most active military operation in Southwest Asia, the most volatile Area of Responsibility assigned to a U.S. combatant commander. The threat in this area was highlighted by the terrorist bomb that killed five Americans in December 1995. Given this attack, we did not need hindsight to see that our forces at Khobar Towers were vulnerable to terrorist attacks.

Why did the Department of Defense fail to issue any guidance on force protection after the attack in December 1995?

Secretary PERRY. After the bombing of the Saudi Arabian National Guard facility in November 1995, we made what we considered to be a prudent judgment, that this attack might not be an isolated event but a new trend. In response to this judgment, we conducted analyses of the vulnerability of our forces in Saudi Arabia. In particular, the Air Force's Office of Special Investigations conducted a vulnerability analysis of the Khobar Towers in which they had full access to all sources of intelligence on the terrorist threat to Saudi Arabia. The analysis did not provide the commander with any specific threat, but rather laid out a wide variety of threat alternatives. Consequently, our commanders received recommendations to take a variety of actions. Many actions were completed prior to the Khobar Towers bombing, though many of these actions were focused on preventing attacks of a completely different nature. Indeed, these actions may have prevented different styles of attacks from occurring. My assessment is that our commanders were trying to do right, but given the non-specific nature of the intelligence, had a difficult task to know specifically what to plan for. Many of the measures we took were appropriate for the size of the bomb used in November 1995, but this attack turned out to be 10 times as powerful as the previous attack.

## FUNDING FOR OVERSEAS INSTALLATION IN SUPPLEMENTAL

Senator THURMOND. General Shalikashvili, half of the funds requested in the supplemental is for one installation in Saudi Arabia.

Can you explain how all requirements for the remainder of our overseas installations can be met for about the same amount of money?

What level of security are we buying? How will future requirements in this area be determined? What level of funding will be necessary to ensure our troops protection? Will force protection be included in the fiscal year 1998 budget request?

General SHALIKASHVILI. Our intention was not to represent the supplemental request as being the final answer on anti-terrorism force protection requirements for overseas installations other than Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia. Half of the funds requested in the supplemental, which went to Congress in early September, were necessarily focused on Saudi Arabia and the relocation of activities from vulnerable spots to more defensible locations. While our request at the time also included requirements for other overseas locations, it was realized that many additional overseas requirements would be defined as the combating terrorism program matured. However, we are progressing as rapidly as possible to define those additional requirements so that we can present them to Congress for funding.

Among the resource additions, an important element pertaining to overseas installations, was improving vulnerability assessments. This included a substantial augmentation of Service assessment capabilities and the addition of an independent vulnerability assessment capability which will report to me. The Defense Special weapons Agency will provide this capability to both me and the installation commanders. We have set a 1997 calendar year goal for Defense Special Weapons Agency to conduct 50 worldwide assessments, increasing to a goal of 100 assessments in calendar year 1998 and beyond. These assessments will enable a more definitive understanding of installation needs.

The level of security we are buying will address the requirements of the combatant commanders, Services, and Defense agencies. Using guidance in Department of Defense Directive 2000.12, "DOD Combating Terrorism Program," all Department of Defense components will assess their requirements based upon standards in Department of Defense Handbook 0-2000.12-H, "Protection of Department of Defense Personnel and Activities against Acts of Terrorism." The level of security we are providing presently, and plan for the future, is not perfect and will never be able to provide 100 percent assurance of protection from the effects of terrorism. In the areas where our interests are great, we must accept some risks while, at the same time, methodically and consistently reducing the risk to our men and women in uniform.

Future requirements in Antiterrorism/Force Protection will be determined by the Service chiefs and combatant commanders. Department of Defense Directive 2000.12 was re-issued in September 1996 to more clearly define Service, combatant commander, and Chairman of the Joint Staff responsibilities for force protection, including resource emphasis. This directive requires commanders of combatant commands with geographic responsibility to identify shortfalls in force protection with suggested corrective actions each quarter until the action is completed. These shortfalls will be based upon the renewed emphasis on combating terrorism vis-a-vis the threat condition levels in each theater; thorough reviews, by commanders at all levels, of the uniform standards for physical security found in DOD Handbook 0-2000.12-11; and the results of an integrated program of vulnerability assessments conducted by the Services, combatant commands and Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The level of funding necessary to provide adequate security has been based upon inputs from the Defense agencies, Services, and combatant commands. We reviewed all programs related to Antiterrorism Force Protection and prioritized inputs from the agencies, Services, and combatant commands. Based upon this review, we ultimately added \$170 million to antiterrorism programs for the fiscal year 1998 request and nearly \$700 million in the Future Year Defense Plan.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW DEFENSE-WIDE PROGRAM ELEMENT FOR COUNTER-TERRORISM

Senator THURMOND. Secretary Perry, currently, the Department of Defense does not budget for a specific antiterrorism program; rather, funding for antiterrorism is incorporated within the normal costs of operations and personnel. With the increasing terrorist threat, the increasing attention we must pay to force protection/antiterrorism is receiving and the designation of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs as the principal focal point for these issues, will the Department create a specific counter-terrorism account?

Secretary PERRY. The Department created a specific account, under the control of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, to respond to antiterrorism. The Combating Ter-

rorism Readiness Initiative Fund will be used to respond to unanticipated changes in terrorism threats or doctrine and to address combatant commanders, unanticipated requirements. In fiscal year 1997, \$14 million was reprogrammed within DOD to support the initiative fund. In fiscal year 1998 and each remaining year of the Future Year Defense Plan, the fund is budgeted at \$15 million. The Department has also taken measures to improve the visibility of antiterrorism funding. This fall, the Department of Defense Antiterrorism Force Protection Program Review undertook an intensive effort to identify funding associated with antiterrorism. This was done to establish a funding baseline for unfunded requirements and to better track antiterrorism funding. Additionally, we are requiring Services and Defense agencies to highlight antiterrorism funding in future budget submissions as a basis for review of trends and resource sufficiency.

#### DOD LESSONS FROM BEIRUT BOMBING

Senator THURMOND. Secretary Perry, after the Long Commission investigated the October 1983 bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, its report recommended that the Secretary of Defense "direct the development of doctrine, planning, organization, force structure, education and training necessary to defend against and counter terrorism." Our losses after this latest attack make clear that the Department of Defense has not implemented this recommendation.

Can you explain the lapse in force protection in light of the Long Commission recommendation?

Secretary PERRY. The U.S. military has made numerous changes in doctrine, planning, organization, force structure, education and training since the attack on the Marine barracks in Beirut. In my judgment however, the diversity of all the documents on force protection, and their advisory rather than directive nature left it up to each commander to determine best how to implement anti-terrorism force protection. Additionally, our force protection doctrine and training is still evolving as the Department continues the transition to joint operations under combatant commands.

To correct this situation, Department of Defense Directive 2000.12, DOD Combating Terrorism Program, has been revised and reissued. This directive makes Department of Defense Handbook 02000.12-H directive in nature and constitutes the Department of Defense standards for all personnel and department components. The Joint Staff, in conjunction with the Services and combatant commands, is revising the standards for issue in early 1997. These standards will be performance-based in nature and applicable for all levels of command.

Joint doctrine and Service doctrine exists for force protection and is reviewed on a continuing periodic basis. As a result of guidance to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in DOD Directive 2000.12, the Chairman is reviewing all Service and joint doctrine to ensure our doctrine on force protection is equal in stature and content to our other warfighting doctrinal manuals.

The new standards in DOD Handbook 0-2000.12-H require each level of command to develop plans and measures for combating terrorism at each installation and location. DOD Directive 2000.12 requires each combatant commander to review organization of his forces to ensure adequate force protection is provided. Additionally, the combatant commanders must ensure all personnel are aware of how force protection is provided to them.

Force structure for combating terrorism is under review to ensure each combatant command has adequate forces and personnel to conduct the force protection mission. The Department is reallocating billets and positions where necessary to enhance command staffs, force protection forces, and force protection assessment teams.

Training for all Department of Defense personnel has recently been enhanced with the four-level training system developed by the Joint Staff in conjunction with the combatant commanders and Services. In addition, formal professional military education at all Service schools and joint schools will incorporate instruction on anti-terrorism force protection. The education provided in this training will enhance the ability for all Department of Defense personnel and family members to combat the effects of terrorism.

We are also providing expert assistance to each installation and command with vulnerability assessments from the Defense Special Weapons Agency. These assessments will review the organizational structure in each command to ensure force protection is addressed equally with mission accomplishment. Additionally, all command plans for combating terrorism will be reviewed to ensure the combating terrorism program plans are thorough and complete.

Countering terrorism has long been one of the mission tasks for our special forces. They have developed tactics for use against terrorist organizations and train to use



these on a regular basis. Their ability to perform has been enhanced greatly since 1983, and I am confident of their ability to perform if called upon to counter a specific terrorist organization.

I have reviewed the measures we have taken to date, and am confident that we will continue to provide the best force protection available for our personnel and their families.

#### FUNDING QUESTIONS

Senator THURMOND. Mr. Secretary, the congress increased the budget fiscal year 1996 request for defense by \$7.0 billion to help alleviate modernization problems. At that time the administration's view was that the increase to the budget request was unnecessary.

Mr. Secretary, at the end of the fiscal year, half of this \$7.0 billion has been used as offsets for Bosnia or other ongoing operations, to include possibly this current supplemental on terrorism. Modernization continues to be a problem, but the administration, as reported in the press, would like to continue to divert funds to domestic problems or to other requirements. When will modernization accounts be fixed? Would this money be better spent on force protection for our military forces rather than other than defense?

Secretary PERRY. [Question was unanswered at time of printing. Any response received will be retained in committee files.]

#### DOD FUNDING LEVELS FOR TERRORISM

Senator THURMOND. General Shalikashvili, earlier this year, the Department provided the committee with information about the level of funding expended by the Department of Defense for anti-terrorism. This information stated that there had been an 82 percent reduction in specific Air Force anti-terrorism funding, a 55 percent reduction in specific Army anti-terrorism funding and, a 62 percent reduction in specific Navy anti-terrorism funding. In view of the increased exposure of U.S. military forces around the world brought about by the increase in contingency operations, are such reductions prudent?

General SHALIKASHVILI. The reductions cited were reported in the May 1996 DOD Anti-terrorism Task Force Report and applied to several small program elements uniquely associated with anti-terrorism. Altogether, these Air Force, Army, and Naval programs cited amounted to about \$36 million in fiscal year 1997 with the reductions applied to personnel cuts, base closures, and completed construction projects.

In Fall 1996, as part of a DOD Force Protection Program Review, a broader look was taken to identify existing Defense resources associated with anti-terrorism. This effort identified over \$4.2 billion per year of existing DOD resources associated with anti-terrorism force protection. Physical security forces, equipment, and facilities improvements comprised the largest part of this amount averaging \$3.3 billion per year, followed by counter-terrorism, investigative matters, and counterintelligence which collectively average \$900 million on an annual basis. These resources have been relatively stable since 1991.

#### FORCE PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITY

Senator THURMOND. General Shalikashvili, it appears from the Downing Report that, by military doctrine, the commander with operational control has responsibility for force protection measures, and that commanders exercising tactical control do not have this responsibility. This clearly did not make sense when the commander exercising operational control was 7,000 miles away, and the Commander, JTF-Southwest Asia, who was both very close to the 4404th and has a semi-permanent relationship with the unit, exercised only tactical control.

Given that the command structure did not support the force protection needs of the 4404th, do you recommend giving deployed JTF commanders operational control for purposes of force protection?

General SHALIKASHVILI. After the attack on Khobar Towers, the Commander, U.S. Central Command, gave the Commander, Joint Task Force Southwest Asia, full force protection responsibility for all forces assigned to U.S. Central Command operating in support of Joint Task Force Southwest Asia. The Commander, U.S. Central Command also elected to establish a Joint Rear Area Coordinator as a forward representative for U.S. Central Command for force protection issues. After a lengthy review, the Saudi Arabian Government just recently approved our request to establish the Joint Rear Area Coordinator in Saudi Arabia. The Joint Rear Area Coordinator will be responsible for facilitating the protection and operation of forces and installations supporting the joint task force. The Joint Rear Area Coordinator will

integrate intelligence and counterintelligence, communications of threat information, and host nation support for our facilities. The establishment of the Joint Rear Area Coordinator will improve the ability of U.S. Central Command to provide force protection across its area of responsibility in Southwest Asia.

#### PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Senator THURMOND. Secretary Perry, the Downing Report mentions only Brigadier General Schwalier by name in its findings. Yet, the majority of the findings in the report point to systemic deficiencies which are primarily the responsibility of the Department of Defense, the U.S. Central Command, and the Central Command Air Force. You appear to accept the referral of disciplinary matters to the Secretary of the Air Force as the final act in determining responsibility.

Is it your position that everyone in the chain of command above Generals Schwalier and Franklin are absolved of personal responsibility?

Secretary PERRY. I believe it would be inappropriate to comment on what will be the final actions of the Department while review of the Air Force report is still ongoing. Once the review is complete, the Department will issue a statement.

#### TERRORISM: IS IT SOMETHING NEW?

Senator THURMOND. General Shalikashvili/Secretary Perry, I reviewed General Downing's report and listened to the public comments by top DOD officials describing their understanding of the report. What is striking to the many constituents who have called me is how little has been learned and implemented over the years.

Terrorism is almost regarded as novelty rather than a well-established long-standing threat. Many of the observations in the General Downing's report are similar to those in the Long Commission report. Yet for over 2 decades many modern acts of terrorism have been committed. How many lives must be lost?

General SHALIKASHVILI. It is incorrect to state that we have not improved the way we protect ourselves from terrorist acts. But as we have improved, so have the terrorists grown in sophistication. It is unrealistic to expect that we can totally defend against terrorists by defensive measures alone. Ultimately, until we can get inside terrorist organizations and attempt to prevent terrorist acts before they happen, terrorist acts will continue to occur. Yet today's terrorist organizations acts will continue to occur. Yet today's terrorist organizations are extremely difficult to penetrate particularly by a nation whose legal and moral code make it nearly impossible to employ operatives who successfully pose as members of terrorist cells.

Obviously, we cannot accept even a single additional loss of life due to terrorist attacks. But, we must also not forget that there are groups and or individuals planning to do harm to United States forces somewhere in the world. In the areas where our interests are great, we must accept that risk while, at the same time, continuing to methodically and consistently reduce the risk to our men and women in uniform. Only with proper security measures can we thwart these efforts and prevent catastrophic events such as Khobar Towers.

To this end, we have undertaken a program to institutionalize our anti-terrorism and force protection programs. We continue to make it clear at all levels of command and throughout the Department of Defense that we, as American defense personnel, are viable targets of terrorist acts and must be prepared. To fulfill this goal, and proceed on a path to make the United States military the premier anti-terrorism experts in the world, I have established a deputy directorate on the Joint Staff to coordinate the combating terrorism program efforts of the services and combatant commands. We have re-emphasized and expanded our training and education programs; increased interactions between our Department of Defense commanders and Department of State leadership; energized industry to support us in our technological advances; devised and implemented Department of Defense standards for our force protection programs; and expanded our assessment capabilities and frequency.

These changes will ensure that responsibility is assigned clearly and receives the highest level of attention. The aggregate effect of these changes will enhance our approach to force protection by placing force protection up front as a major consideration with other key mission goals. Additionally, commanders will have to constantly evaluate the threat and corresponding protection measures. Finally, commanders will be empowered with additional resources and flexibility to be fully responsive to the threat.

Short of bringing our forward-deployed troops home, we will never be able to completely eliminate the risk. Each combatant commander is taking prudent and necessary action to provide force protection for all deployed troops. Through our combating terrorism program and other operational measures, we will manage the risk at an acceptable level commensurate with requirements for forward deployment.

Each combatant commander will continue to assess their operations on a continuing basis to ensure proper risk management is provided for their troops.

#### CULPABILITY FOR INCIDENT AT KHOBAR TOWER

Senator THURMOND. General Shalikashvili, the Downing report seems to lay much of the blame on the wing commander stationed in Dhahran. Yet, much of the report seems to ascribe the source of the problem to the "tangled chain of command" and ill-conceived command relationships. Who is responsible for establishing these command relationships?

General SHALIKASHVILI. The combatant commanders are responsible for establishing and reviewing the chain of command for each joint task force. Doctrinally, a joint task force commander is responsible for force protection of all forces assigned to the joint task force. In accordance with the revised Department of Defense Directive 2000.12, "DOD Combating Terrorism Program," if a combatant commander decides to vest responsibility for force protection outside of the joint task force commander, he must report that decision to the Secretary of Defense through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Additionally, I can periodically direct a review by the combatant commanders of the appropriateness of command relationships of each existing task force.

#### DEFENSE ELEMENT TO OVERSEE COUNTER-TERRORISM PROGRAM

Senator THURMOND. Secretary Perry, in his report, General Downing found that there was no single element in the Department of Defense responsible for force protection and recommended the designation of a single DOD element to oversee force protection matters and efforts. Possible candidates for this oversight responsibility were identified as the Defense Special Weapons Agency, formerly known as the Defense Nuclear Agency, and the national weapons laboratories.

Why did you choose the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs as the principal advisor on force protection and the establishment of an element within the Joint Staff to be responsible for force protection matters, rather than a separate DOD element?

Secretary PERRY. The appointment of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the principal advisor on force protection ensured unity of effort on this critical issue. The Chairman provides a focal point for all elements of the combating terrorism program to ensure our policies result in adequate force protection measures. The Chairman will also audit the Department's program to ensure it is truly institutionalized and part of our everyday decision matrix for use of military forces.

Because force protection measures must be carried out by our uniformed military organizations, the Chairman's review and coordination of force protection activities creates the link to broader national security policy matters with the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. To perform this function, the Chairman established an appropriate force protection element within the Joint Staff.

As the primary, high-level advocate for force protection, the Chairman ensures force protection requirements are placed as a major consideration along with other mission goals as we plan military operations, and that focus on force protection is maintained throughout the operation. The Chairman ensures that adequate force protection is a top priority for every commander at every level within our military organization, and that commanders are empowered to ensure that force protection measures respond to the unique situation on the ground. Additionally, the Chairman has engaged the Defense Special Weapons Agency in this effort so that their special skills are available for every commander. They will form the core of the Department's assessment effort that reviews the combating terrorism program at each installation. Their expertise in blast effects and effects of weapons of mass destruction will give each commander expert advice on mitigation techniques for blast and effects from other types of weapons.

As the key military advisor to the President and the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman also ensures force protection receives a high priority in budgetary allocations made by the Services. As the representative of the joint forces, the Chairman is in the best position to ensure a joint and uniform approach to force protection throughout the Service components.

#### COOPERATION WITH ALLIES IN COUNTER-TERRORISM EFFORTS

Senator THURMOND. General Shalikashvili, the Downing Task Force determined during its investigation of the terrorist incident that some allies of the United States have extensive experience in the area of combating terrorism.

The defense budget has included funding in it over the years for cooperative research and development efforts in the range of between \$25 million to \$50 million



per year for DOD and the military services. Do any of these cooperative efforts include anti-terrorist projects?

General SHALIKASHVILI. The cooperative research and development (R&D) efforts you describe generally do not include anti-terrorism projects. However, we are conducting a number of cooperative R&D projects with allies under the Counterterror Technical Support Program. This program is managed by the office of the Secretary of Defense, and a portion of the program involves anti-terrorism development activities with Israel, Great Britain, and Canada. The Counterterror Technical Support program is conducting 14 projects with Israel, 18 projects with the United Kingdom, and 11 projects with Canada for anti-terrorism applications. A number of projects have direct application to force protection, such as the blast mitigation work being conducted with the Israelis. Additionally, we have stepped up cooperative interactions with our allies at the Joint Staff level with the formation of the Joint Staff Deputy Directorate for Combating Terrorism. These interactions include visits with allies during which we share experiences in combating terrorism, exchange doctrinal manuals, and share technical data such as blast effects data.

#### FORCE PROTECTION

Senator THURMOND. Secretary Perry, the National Command Authority—the President and the Secretary of Defense are responsible for ensuring the safety of our forces deployed overseas by ensuring that they have the best means available to defend themselves. However, it does not appear that adequate attention—either through funding or guidance—was paid to a very real threat in this tragic matter. How do you respond to criticism about the adequacy of the Department's efforts?

Secretary PERRY. Force protection is not, nor never will be, perfect or provide 100 percent assurance of protection from the effects of terrorism. DOD has been very active in improving force protection measures in the past few years. Following the office of the Program Manager—Saudi Arabian National Guard bombing in November 1995, DOD implemented additional force protection measures at all levels of command.

The Secretary of Defense established a DOD Anti-terrorism Task Force that directed a review of all DOD installation security and anti-terrorist procedures. As part of this effort, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff directed the combatant commanders review Threat Condition procedures and force protection measures worldwide. At Central Command, the commander increased the Threat Condition for his geographical region and directed 130 additional force protection measures to reduce or mitigate vulnerability to terrorist events. These measures included: physical barriers, gun positions, limited road access, increased perimeter patrols, increased vehicle inspections, 24 hour bomb dog teams, 100 percent identification checks, reinforced awareness training, etc. These examples, as well as the measures implemented after the bombing, have served to strengthen our posture toward this growing threat.

America has global interests and responsibilities. Our national security strategy for protecting those interests requires deployment of our forces to the far reaches of the globe. When terrorists attack our forces overseas, they are attacking our ability to protect and defend our vital interests in the world. We have learned much from this incident, and through the efforts of everyone in the Department, we will work to become the premier military at combating terrorism.

Senator THURMOND. Mr. Secretary, I understand that you have now decided to relocate U.S. Forces in Saudi Arabia, consolidating them at a remote desert location.

While this relocation may increase security from a car bomb, might they be more vulnerable to a chemical attack?

Secretary PERRY. As you know, we moved immediately after the bombing to implement two major actions: relocating to a safer and more defensible area and withdrawing most of our family members from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. We believe these actions provided us the best possible protection of our forces and their families, consistent with completing the mission we had undertaken.

Relocating our forces to Al Kharj significantly reduced their vulnerability to terrorist use of chemical weapons. The added standoff provided by the perimeter at Al Kharj eliminated most weapons from targeting the compound. This fact, combined with the generally unfavorable wind conditions, makes it very difficult to concentrate lethal concentrations of chemical agents in the compound. In addition, all personnel have been issued personnel protective equipment, and adequate replacement stocks are available on site.

This area, along with all others in the theater, can be targeted by ballistic missiles carrying chemical munitions. Recognizing this potential threat, the combatant commander has provided a Patriot Missile battery at Prince Sultan Air Field to pro-

vide area coverage for the base. While this threat exists, it is unlikely that a terrorist organization would be able to acquire and employ this weapon system.

The intelligence agencies continuously review the possibility that our forces could become more vulnerable to chemical weapons in the remote locations such as Al Kharj. While there has been no specific intelligence indicating potential use of chemical weapons against our troops at Al Kharj, we will continue to actively pursue updated intelligence in this area.

#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE

Senator INHOFE. There was an expectation, seemingly at all levels, that the limit for any possible bomb at Khobar Towers would be no greater than approximately 200 pounds.

In light of the fact that the bombing of the Marine Barracks in Beirut was in excess of 12,000 pounds, was the theoretical limit of 200 pounds at Khobar Towers based on any factual evidence or simply an empirical limit that was reached by comparison with the OPM/SANG bombing?

General DOWNING. Certainly there was historical precedent for a bomb of the magnitude of the Khobar Towers bomb, (e.g., Beirut which is estimated as 12,000 pounds, according to the Long Commission and our Report). Despite intelligence that suggested the bomb could be larger, most senior military commanders expected a lesser threat similar to the OPM/SANG attack.

Senator INHOFE. You have been involved in special operations for most of your military career. You have been required to think not only with innovation, but to think like the enemy to survive. You have done an exemplary job of identifying serious lapses in leadership across the Department of Defense in your report on the bombing at Khobar Towers.

Can you look forward to a couple of years and considering that most of our land-based troops will be deployed in remote areas of Saudi Arabia, can you postulate some scenarios of possible future terrorist attacks on our troops deployed abroad assuming all your recommendations are followed?

General DOWNING. My experience has taught me to continually reevaluate the threat and the mission rather than concentrating attention countering possible scenarios. Therefore, I believe a comprehensive, integrated approach to force protection that combines awareness and training, physical security measures, advanced technology systems and specific protection measures tailored to each location is the key to countering future terrorist attacks.

Senator INHOFE. It is not clear by your report what led to the delay in sounding the "Giant Voice" alert system after the sentries identified the truck? Can you clarify the chain of events that occurred after the sentries identified the suspicious truck until the explosion occurred?

General DOWNING. Upon recognition of suspicious activity at 9:49PM by the security police approximately 6 minutes passed before the explosion (9:55PM) occurred. There was insufficient time to activate "Giant Voice" because the procedures (which had not been tested) were cumbersome and time consuming. The observation post security guards notified their superiors to activate Giant Voice. These superiors at the Security Police Command Center in Khobar Towers in turn had to notify the WING Operations Center (WOC) by telephone or radio (the WING Operations Center was located 4 miles away at the Dhahran Air Base). The WOC then had to notify the Commander or his representative to request permission to activate Giant Voice. Once given permission, Giant Voice could be activated. The power failed due to the effects of the bomb blast. The Security Police Command Center was then unable to notify the WOC. Of note was the fact that even if Giant Voice was activated, it could not be heard in many rooms, especially because of the noise from window air conditioning units.

#### REPORT OF THE DOWNING TASK FORCE ON THE BOMB ATTACK ON KHOBAR TOWERS

Senator INHOFE. You have identified the need for the leadership under your command to think with innovation in the fight against terrorism.

Can you describe some innovative leadership decisions that have been made in your office since the bombing at Khobar Towers?

Secretary PERRY. In the fight against terrorism, leadership is key to success. To ensure that no aspects of this problem go unattended I have designated the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs the new responsibility as my principal advisor and the Department's focal point for all matters related to force protection. Within the Joint Staff, he has established an office headed by a General Officer which is dedicated to this mission. Moreover, I am requiring that each Commander-in-Chief (CINC) ex-

PLICITLY review the assignment of operational responsibility for force protection in every overseas deployment. In addition, the Secretary of State and I have agreed that force protection for the major noncombatant forces deployed on the Arabian Peninsula, previously under the responsibility of the Department of State, will now come under the responsibility of CINCCENT. I am further directing that all CINCs review arrangements for non-combatant protection worldwide and recommend for my consideration adjustments they believe necessary.

In addition, I have also reconstituted the Anti-terrorism Coordinating Committee (ATCC), which was originally established in August 1990. The ATCC is now co-chaired by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict and the Director for Operations, Joint Staff. This elevation of the ATCC will facilitate its work in identifying issues that affect force protection and developing related policy recommendations.

These changes will ensure that responsibility is assigned clearly and receives the highest level of attention. We also needed a clear statement of the policies and responsibilities that must be met and implemented. I, therefore, have issued a revision of DOD Directive 2000.12, "DOD Combatting Terrorism Program," which codifies the various initiatives we have taken.

Senator INHOFE. General Downing has made a number of recommendations in his report on the bombing of Khobar Towers. Can you describe which recommendations you do not intend to employ completely and why?

Secretary PERRY. I have accepted 20 of the 26 recommendations made by General Downing. Of the six remaining recommendations, I only rejected one and partially accepted five.

- **Recommendation 1b, c, e.** That a single agency within DOD be designated to develop issue and inspect compliance with force protection security standards.

Partially accepted. I did not designate a "single agency." Instead I designated CJCS my principal advisor and focal point for force protection and established a new Joint Staff office for force protection.

- **Recommendation 15a.** Promulgate memorandums of understanding (MOU) between host nation and U.S. forces delineating responsibilities for protecting U.S. operated facilities, to include procedures for upgrading security when threat levels change.

Partially accepted. In close cooperation with the Department of State, I plan to negotiate memoranda of understanding with host nations on these matters where appropriate, and to continue to work to improve cooperation at all levels. However, there are countries where American troops are stationed where for political and other reasons such an agreement would be either inappropriate or could not be successfully negotiated.

- **Recommendation 16a.** Assign all DOD personnel to the unified combatant commander, except those whose principal function supports the Chief of Mission.

Partially accepted. The September 1996 DoS/DOD MOU, where appropriate, delegated security responsibilities on the Arabian Peninsula to DOD. The terms of the MOU provide for exceptions which are listed therein.

- **Recommendation 16b.** Provide the U.S. Defense Representative directive authority for force protection matters over ALL DOD personnel not assigned to the unified combatant commander.

Partially accepted. Same as 16 a.

- **Recommendation 23c.** Provide an increased number of ambulances to Saudi Arabia.

Rejected. After careful review, I determined that sufficient vehicles are available.

- **Recommendation 23g.** Establish contingency contracting for local translator support in a crisis.

Partially accepted. Requests for additional translators are being pursued in host nation support negotiations. However, there are circumstances in which it would be clearly inappropriate and a security risk to rely solely on such host country support.





## QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR SAM NUNN

## COST OF RELOCATING U.S. FORCES IN SAUDI ARABIA AND HOST GOVERNMENT'S CONTRIBUTION THERETO

Senator NUNN. The administration submitted a supplemental last week that requests \$122 million to relocate our forces from Dhahran to a more remote location in Saudi Arabia.

Is the Saudi Government paying for part of that cost? How much is the total cost of moving those forces, and how much is the Saudi Government contributing?

Secretary PERRY. The cost of the relocation will be shared. Generally, the U.S. will bear the near term relocation cost, while the Saudis will pay for permanent upgrades to the bases that they will make available for our use. The Saudis will also pay the entire relocation costs for security assistance personnel as required by law.

U.S. costs associated with the relocation are expected to be approximately \$120 million. This does not include funding for any of the permanent facilities or upgrades for which the Saudis have agreed to pay. U.S. forces will use existing runways and hangars. Since the Saudis are providing any permanent facilities or upgrades, no military construction is required.

The Department required no additional authorization to provide protection for its forces. The cost of the force protection moves, however, cannot be accommodated within existing appropriations. Congress appropriated \$122.6 million as a fiscal year 1996 supplemental to cover the U.S. costs.

Senator NUNN. Has the Defense Department incurred any incremental costs in fiscal year 1996, or do you now anticipate incurring additional incremental costs during fiscal year 1997, above the levels already included in the fiscal year 1997 budget as a result of the ongoing operations in and around northern and southern Iraq?

If so, please explain how large these incremental costs are, the activities responsible for these costs, and how you recommend that those incremental costs be covered.

Secretary PERRY. The Navy and the Air Force incurred fiscal year 1996 incremental costs in executing Operation DESERT STRIKE. The Air Force deferred \$7.4 million in non-readiness related projects to fiscal year 1997 in order to cover the costs of this effort, while the Navy was able to realign \$6.0 million within funds appropriated for Operation SOUTHERN WATCH for costs of DESERT STRIKE.

The Army incurred \$8.8 million in additional fiscal year 1996 Operation INTRINSIC ACTION costs resulting from additional troop deployments. The fiscal year 1997 costs of this effort are anticipated to be \$28.7 million. The fiscal year 1996 costs were covered through delay of non-readiness related projects to fiscal year 1997. Funding for the fiscal year 1997 costs will be addressed during preparation of the fiscal year 1998 budget.

The Department is also incurring some costs in support of the Kurdish evacuees on Guam. During fiscal year 1996, \$1.7 million was provided from the Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Assistance appropriation; costs for fiscal year 1997 cannot be determined at this time but will be addressed during preparation of the fiscal year 1998 budget.

[Whereupon, at 5:18 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

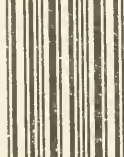




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